CHAPTER-ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

Community forest management is about the local people who are working in the particular area of the forest with the use right involved in the consumption and the management of the local forest. The assumption of the community forest resource management is the management of the forest by the organization built with the local individuals who are the users of the particular forest area from a long time. The organization is rooted in the local values, practices, way of life and economic activities and long-standing traditional practices (Lindsay, 2000).

Community forest management policy was introduced in Nepal in 1978 as community forestry in response to the failure of the management from the center government based forest management policy (Private Forest Nationalization Act, 1957). This policy made the people authorized of them management of the forest near of their community under the community level organization (That time's village level political unit, panchayat). Later on the provision has been made to form a separate independent group of the forest users to manage the forest as the Community Forest User Group (CFUG), which is an autonomous, self-governing organization by the policy level and responsible for the preparing their own constitution and operational plan to run the programmers as their own wishes (WG-CIFM, 2002).

History indicates that interest of the government in forest management emerged only after the overthrow of the Rana regime in 1950. The first forestry policy was written in 1953/54. Though the policy recognized the importance of forests for meeting subsistence needs, it was never implemented. To prevent the destruction of forest wealth and to ensure the adequate protection, maintenance and utilization of privately owned forests, *The Private Forest Nationalization Act* was passed in 1957 and all forestlands were brought under the control of the Forest Department. However, due to lack of human, financial and other resources needed to put all accessible forests under proper management, government could not achieve the above objective and hence, widespread

indiscriminate cutting of forests. The government passed *The Forest Act, 1961* to protect, manage and utilize the forest efficiently. For strengthening the role of the Forest Department, *the Forest Conservation Act, 1967* was introduced. However, these Acts also could not help to control the deterioration of forest. Instead the condition of forests further worsened.

In 1975, a conference was convened in Kathmandu to consider various issues relating to the management of forests in Nepal. It was attended by Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs) from all over the country and senior members of the Forest Department and the concerning Ministry. It was remarkable in that the planned three-day meeting extended to 23 days because of the great interest that was generated and the desire to make strong statement on the need to address the deteriorating condition of the country's forests. The conference was followed by the formation of a working group charged with the task of formulating a plan to guide the future development of forestry in Nepal. This culminated in the publishing of the National Forestry Plan in 1976, which recognized the importance of encouraging the conversion of community or government land to "Panchayat Forests" (Gilmour 2003:5-7).

This was followed by the adoption of *Panchayat Forest Rules* and *Panchayat Protected Forest Rules (1978)* that would govern the handing over of government forestland to the local Panchayat, expecting people's participation in the forest management through local political body. These landmark regulations gave formal recognition of the rights of villagers to manage their own forest resources with technical assistance being provided by the Forest Department. The right of villagers was further strengthened by the provision of the Decentralization Act, 1982. The model was no longer sustained due to division of forest resources and people as well by political boundary and administration by elected political bodies.

Therefore, considering the urgent need to redress the deteriorating forest situation, the government of Nepal, with assistance of ADB and FINNIDA, prepared and implemented a long-term MPFS in 1989. Twelve programs have been formulated to meet its long-term and medium-term objectives of all aspects of forestry and forestry-related areas. Out of them, the government has led strong emphasis to Community and Private Forestry Program. This is the largest program and recognized as the first priority program by the MPFS.

About 47 percent of the whole forestry sector budget is allocated for the community and private forestry program alone. To develop and manage the forest resources through community participation to meet their needs is the main objective of the CF program (Khadka 1999:10).

Community forestry in Nepal has come a long way since it was introduced. Nepal was one of the first Asian countries to introduce the community forestry program to overcome the environmental problems. It was begun as a program to regenerate degraded forest and to supply or fulfill the basic needs of people. So community forestry policy's main objective is to involve the local people in managing, using and protecting their local forest resources through organizational effort. The government policy of Community Forestry has empowered local people to make the decision about local forest resource. So that the community people will be benefited by forest in relation to fulfill their needs of timber, firewood, leaf litter and fodder. The Community Forestry approach has made a remarkable progress from highly technical forestry to participatory forestry, from protection oriented forestry policy (Private Forest Nationalization Act, 1957) to the sustainable utilization oriented forest policy (Gilmour, et al and Hobley, 1992). For this reasons, Nepal's community has been recognized internationally as one of the most progressive in the world (Bartlett and Narse 1992; Bird, 2000).

From beginning to now, one of the inseparable parts of Nepal's community forestry program is people's participation, involvement of the users in community forestry development process. Different trend has been established in different time under the board concept of people's participation. In present, the major issue of the community forest program management is the social equality ,gender balanced and people participation in forest user group, Participation of the people belong to different economic class, caste/ethnic group and social identity can make difference in the overall community forestry development program (Win Rock, 2002). In present GOs, INGOs and other organizations working on the area of the forestry has highly emphasized on the social issue and within it one of the prominent issue is gender balanced, people participation in forest management.

This sensitiveness has made the different programs targeting to increase people's involvement. Forest is a renewable natural resource, which provides a

wide range of socio-economic benefits and services. Rural people are dependent on forest for the various products to fulfill their basic needs such as firewood, small size pole, fodder, leaf litter and medicinal plant. Forest management can be defined as the 'deciding what one wishes to do with a forest, taking into account what one do with it and deciding what one should do with it' (FAO, 1993).

In most of Asian countries women spend the significant portion of their time in forest related activities. Women are the active users and have the primary responsibilities to collect forest product in agriculture-based society. The collection of the firewood for cooking, leaf litter for the cattle and the compost fertilizer and fodder (Daurghas) is the major responsibilities of the women (Molnar, 1992). Thus it is expected that women should take part in the community forest management actively and successfully. For that strong policy supporting to the women's involvement and favorable social environment becomes fundamental. Since the policy in the government level as well as in Forest User Group level Operation Plan and constitution seems with a little bit special address and the programs to uplift the people's position in the community forest management. But effective identification of the women associated with different interest group and roles and responsibilities in forest management by the policy level can be welcoming and a fruitful approach for the people's active involvement in the community forestry management.

Due to the elite dominated social structure and hierarchy the need of poor, lower caste and socio-culturally deprived people haven't adequately considered. They are put in the committee to fulfill the criteria of the disadvantaged people's (i.e. Dalit) representation but they don't have any decision making role. Same things repeat in the case of the women also. Although women representatives are in the Executive Committee, it has increased the scope of the powerful minority of women's access to the local forest resource management. Most of the women in forest user group are the wives and daughters of the community's big man i.e. VDC chairman's women family member, rich and elite class women (GON/N, 2002). It has not made access to the poor women, lower caste women and women of the disadvantaged group of the community. This study describes these people's involvement in community forest program and field level reality. How this strategy is being

practiced. It also focuses on how effective the policy is to include different interest group's people and its impact on overall women's involvement.

It has been demonstrated as a highly successful management approach that has resulted in rural farmers gaining increased access to forest resources, together with improvements to biodiversity and landscape values. So far, 1.1 million hectares of forest (about 25% of the national forest area) has been handed over to more than 13,000 community forestry user groups involving 1.4 million households that constitute about 35% of the total population of Nepal (Kanel 2004:5).Moving beyond forests, forestry user groups have become the vehicle of development of community infrastructure such as community buildings, roads, drinking water supplies, bridges, water mills, schools, festival equipments and health aid posts. Many forestry user groups have become rural banks and been able to fund micro credit- schemes (Nurse et al. 2004:42).

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Forest management by local people is the key element of the Nepalese government's forest policy. Its two major objectives are the sustainable forest resource management and fulfilling the basic needs of the people by forest product (Bartlett and Nurse 1992). For both of the basic requirement the people's participation is one of the major agenda of the forest policy also. But in the present context, it has been realizing that the simple concept of the people's participation has been vague and insufficient to secure the access and inclusion of the people of the all interest groups equally. Policy seems a little bit specific for the women by making a specific provision for their certain percent participation in forest user group's activities. But women's involvement and people participation in community forestry is still surrounded by many questions (Khadka, 1999).

Are women making their participation in FUG as according to the constitution, operational plan of the forest user groups and the government operational guideline for the community forestry management or not? How the policy framework has made provision or priority for women and how women are utilizing it? But on the basis of the studies taken before (Regmi, 1991; Khadka, 1999;GoN/N, 2002), it can be easily assumed that people's involvement in the community forestry Programme is very low, passive and

insufficient (leaving some exemplary work) to make any kind of the intervention either being as the EC member or as the general user member (GoN, 2002). Therefore it seems necessary to move inside of this issue to find out the in depth reality. Which makes us to think about the causes why people are still unseen in the community forest resource management? Either policy is weak themselves are not capable to make effective participation or there can be different factors constraining people. On the other hand, socio cultural constraint such as the traditionally prescribed position of the women, socio structural bases and the socially acceptable role of the women has created the hindrances to their meaningful participation. Therefore it seems fundamental to identify the social cultural constraints to understand how policy and the implementation strategy can be made better or more effective to make the clear identification of the factors which can act as the bridge between policy and its proper implementation. So, the study has made in-depth study of the constraints people are facing against their involvement in community forest management.

Next, policy has made the certain legal provision on the response to the less and the passive involvement of people addressing as 'priority will be given to the peopl's participation (Mahila Sahabhagita Lai Prathamikta dine) (GoN/N, 1995). The Concept of the 'interest group' holds great premises in involving or securing the equitable access and the opportunities of people participation in the sustainable community forest resource management (Gilmour and Fisher, 1992). The issue of the gender-balanced participation and people participation has been the hot issue but the issue of the equity among women or intra women equity, which is major dimension of gender balanced participation, has not been focused much. That has made an easy access to those people who have powerful status in the community. The powerful minority of the people ,women whose men member of the household are politically or economically powerful (like elite class women), are getting opportunities rather than the real forest user.

Moreover social inequality prevailing in society on the basis of the caste system has made high caste people of the society more powerful and dominant to those people belonging to the lower caste people. But forest is equally or more important for the (ultra) poor and the occupational caste groups people (i.e. potter, blacksmith). But the key of forest management is mostly in the hand of so-called big people of the community. The lower caste and socio-culturally

deprived people's needs and same right have not been adequately acquainted at the community level reality (Win rock, 2000). In such a situation, it seems necessary to make a specific policy suitable to the particular. Community, cultural background to increase the participation of those disadvantaged group of people. How the policy has made the specific provision to secure the participation, needs and the role of the all interest group's people, policy is still silent to that particular issue? Therefore, this study has centered to the policy of the particular people participation in the community forest management in general and the disadvantaged, poor and lower caste people, women in particular.

) How the policy has addressed the local people participation in community forest Programme?

) What are the social and cultural constraints of the women participation in community forestry Programme?

) Whether the policy has addressed especially to those people having heterogeneous diverse social status or not? If not how does it affect the overall process of women's participation in community forestry Programme?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to find the people's participation in community forest Programme. The specific objectives of the study are:

) To find out people participation in Ranke community forestry user group's activities.

) To find the socio-economic and cultural condition of community forest user's in study area.

) To find the causes affecting women's participation in community forest management

1.4   Limitation of the Study

Nepal is a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic nation. It is really difficult to cover the multicultural, multi-linguistic population in the research for a student researcher. Due to the socio-economic variations may differ the causes of any socio-economic problem and the solution may be different. This study has some limitations. This research is doing by the student researcher, for the partial fulfillment of the requirement of Master of Arts in Rural Development. So, the researcher has limitation in economic source, limited in time and limited manpower for the extensive study. This study also has limitation in theoretical framework. Descriptive as well as exploratory research design is applied in this study other research design are not used so. This study of pyauly village development committee may not be enough to generalize all over the nation. But it will be useful for the same ecological, socio-economic and socio-biological area of the nation.

1.5   Organization of the Study

This thesis will gain its total shape when it go. This study especially covered the few such community forests in Bhojpur District from where the people are getting forest resources. The findings and recommended strategies can be applicable within the district as well as to some other parts of the country, but cannot serve as a basis for making a generalization of the true situation of community forestry Programme in the entire country .This research will gain its total shape when it go through each and every requirement as required for a complete report. This thesis has been planned to present the following chapter scheme:

a. Introduction

b. Review of Literature

c. Research Methodology

d. Overview of the Study Area.

e. People Participation in Community Forest Programme

f. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The first chapter 'Introduction' provides the background, statement of the problem, Significance of the study, objectives of the study, limitation of the study and organization of the study.

The second chapter is the 'Reviewing of Literature'. Here the previous study done by different persons both individually and institutionally are reviewed with their findings and recommendations on the associated fields. Similarly different articles, books, journals and periodicals are to be reviewed. It is mainly related to the theoretical analysis, brief review and pertinent literature available.

The third chapter deals with the 'Research Methodology'. In this chapter different statistical tools are used to tabulate and analyze the data available from the primary and secondary sources are discussed.

Fourth chapter deals with various introduction of the study area providing with introduction, Demographic structure age sex, characteristics, Educational Status, caste/Ethnic composition and different source of income, involvement of people the study area.

Fifth chapter provides, "people participation in community forest Programme activities" in this chapter peoples knowledge about the forest policy, women's involvement in forest resource collection, participation of women in general meeting. Knowledge about Forest and forestry Programme role of women in Community forest management, obstacles for people participation in Community forest management activities and views of local people about people's role in community forestry Programme.

Finally, the sixth chapter states 'Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation' of the study.

The appendix and bibliography are included at the end of this study.

CHAPTER-TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Bases of the Community Forestry in Nepal

Two classical theories, under which Nepal's community has been widely discussed, reviewed are the approach shift from top-down to bottom-up development approach ' and 'common property resource' approach.

2.1.1 Bottom-up Development Approach

The widely discussed assumption under which Nepal's community forestry Programme has been defined is the 'bottom-up' development approach. As Gilmour and Fisher (1991) have defined community forestry program of Nepal is a paradigm shift from top down to bottom up. Nepal forestry change is a shift from the industrial forestry towards the Panchayat forest and Panchayat protect forest. The phrase was coined 'Forest for local community development' to accept the people first and the tree second in forest management. This rhetoric was developed with the assumption that traditional professional forestry paradigm (industrial) forestry is the barriers to the establishment of genuine multidisciplinary approach, to develop the authority of the forest management to the community (Gilmour, King and Hobley, 1992). The traditional 'top-down' forestry approach was an ideology supporting the 'protection' of the forest where new approach supports the effective sustainable management of the common forest resource for the conservation as well as for the use (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991). Therefore, the community forestry development program in Nepal has been considered as an 'innovative' bottom-up approach, because it puts people at the centre of the forestry and makes everything else peripheral (Gilmour, King and Hobley, 1992)

According to Gilmour and Fisher (1991) this innovative bottom-up forestry planning approach   includes:

By the policy, villagers are empowered to take decision about their forest resources.

) Proper reorganization of the organizational power and capabilities of villagers.

) Technical forestry to the social (community) forestry.

) Only protection of the forest to the conservation and sustainable utilization of the forest.

Rest of these two theories, other theories also has emerged in different time periods. Some important theories have been briefly discussed below.

2.1.2 Community Forestry as the common property resource

According to the Barkes (1989) 'a class of resources for which exclusion is difficult and joint use involves subtract ability'. There was confusion related to the concept of common property resources. Common property of ten has been used to refer to the resources available to all and consequently not owned or managed by anyone and also to the situation where access is limited to a specific group that hold the right in common (Barkes, 1989)

People are depended on the forest's output, which are managed collectively by the user as a group. He as defined the concept of common property system as: "Resource, used by the particular group of the user (to the exclusion of the others) an institutional sets rules to govern rules and monitor and enforce the rules. Thus common property system functions only if the group is organized or can organize themselves."

The common property is used to refer to a resource or a collective system for managing the resource. According to the Barkes (1989) 'a class of resources for which exclusion is difficult and joint use involves subtract ability'. There was confusion related to the concept of common property resources. Common property of ten has been used to refer to the resources available to all and consequently not owned or managed by anyone and also to the situation where access is limited to a specific group that hold the right in common (Barkes, 1989)

The community forestry program of Nepal is considered as the common property forest management system. Because it's major features are the organizations of the users, definite membership criteria, social unit, collective interest of the people etc. (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991). It has applied the both formal and informal use of the common property forests by villagers in the

middle hill of the Nepal. Common property forests in Nepal are forests that are not privately owned and which are locally organized as belonging to the community (Bartlett and Malla, 1992).The local management mechanism as FUG has evolved in Nepal as a strategy for the conservation as well as sustainable utilization of the forest to prevent the overuse of the forest. It further has enabled the people to obtain goods and services that improved their livelihoods without compromising long-term values of the forest.

2.1.3 People's Participation in Forest Resource Management

People's participation is an important factor in any development effort. Forest resources have an obvious importance on the economic life of the people living in, around to them. This is particularly obvious where people depend on forests for subsistence such as wild plant and animal foods, firewood and fodder for livestock.

According to Gautam (2002:37) failures of some forestry programs in the past can be traced to the non-inclusion of communities during project planning, execution and evaluation. In many areas of Nepal, where community forestry has been successful, there has been a decrease in the rate of forest degradation and increase in the quality of natural forests, through plantation establishment on marginal lands and improved management of natural forests. Much of the improvement in forest condition, increased vegetation and species diversity can be attributed directly to forest user-group protection and management practices (Blockhus et al. 1995). Attempts to manage the forests are more likely to succeed if the people involved in collecting and harvesting forest products support management plans. They are much more likely to support management plans if the plans take some account of their economic interest. Significant role of forest users in the development of management plans is also important for the successful implementation of the plan.

When plans override local interests, or when they are based on inaccurate assessments of these interests, the people are likely to ignore the rules and to continue their normal activities   Gautam, 2002: 36 Fisher (1993) pointed an example of women in Nepal, who mostly collect firewood, yet they are rarely involved (in any serious way) in planning forest management. Unless

their concerns are recognized and incorporated in the plan, they are unlikely to support the plans.

Jackson and Ingles (1994) argue that FUGs are motivated to accept the responsibility for forest management because users have a vested interest in the fate of their local forests. This argument is particularly relevant when products from community forests have value in the market, because FUGs have an incentive to ensure that forests are properly managed in order that they can continue to obtain benefits from the sale of products. This argument is unique not only to community forestry but also to other participatory natural resource activities.

2.1.4 Decentralization/Devolution of the power in Forest Management

Decentralization and the devolution of the power is the dominant theme of the contemporary forestry policy and management discussion. Because of the failure of the centralized policy to produce the desired result, an attempt to the decentralization of the forest policy was made (Singh, 2000).The trend towards devolution and the decentralization of forest resource management responsibilities was highlighted in Nepal as devolution of the forest management and the utilization right to FUG (FAO, 1995). The devolution of the power in community forestry has emphasized upon the local people's participation in the forest management. Participation has been a catchword of the bottom-up forest development approach. The basic philosophy of the Nepal's community forestry program is people's participation (the forest should be capable to fulfill the basic needs of the people through their participation). The management policy of the forest cannot be in isolation of the people who are supposed to be benefited.

Devolution of the power refers to the relocating the power away from the center focal point. In the context of the community forestry of the Nepal, it describes the relocation of the administrative function or power from center location to regional and local office of the forest, local political body or to the natural user (Fisher, 2000).Therefore, participatory resource management has seen as an appropriate solution to ensure the equitable and sustainable use of the forest (Dahal, 2003). To achieve this aim devolution of power or empower

the local people to management their forest is the first necessary step. Although the board policy has certain guideline and policy framework to guide the forest management, the FUG makes suitable OP and constitution as according to the social structural framework of the particular community In Nepal, the evaluation of the forestry policy since late 70s has encouraged the community forest management (i.e. PPF, PF, and MPFS). FUG is the example of the devolution of the power from government to the user giving high priority to the small-scale utilities and use purpose of the forest rather from the economic point of view. Although macro level board policy (such as MPFS) has guided the community forestry development process, it is actually a community level FUG that is well equipped and authorized to take all decisions of the local forest like making the constitution, OP, sharing of the benefit and etc.. That can bring large differences in the policy implication and practices (WG-CIFM, 2002). So, it can be fine example of the devolution of the power in the forest management of Nepal.

Participation has been a catchword of the bottom-up forest development approach. The basic philosophy of the Nepal's community forestry program is people's participation (the forest should be capable to fulfill the basic needs of the people through their participation). The devolution of the power in community forestry has emphasized upon the local people's participation in the forest management. The management policy of the forest cannot be in isolation of the people who are supposed to be benefited. Thus, participatory resource management has seen as an appropriate solution to ensure the equitable and sustainable use of the forest (Dahal, 2003). To achieve this aim devolution of power or empower, awareness the local people to management their forest is the first necessary step.

2.1.5 Equity among the Women in Forestry Group

To understand gender issue in forest management it is necessary to look at the gender roles and division in term of ownership and control over and access to resource, knowledge and the product of their labor (Sarin, 1996).Strategies to increase women's control over the local natural resource management must address the question of gender relation. Probably all the societies, women have little value to men because of the subordinate social

status. In the rural Nepalese society, there is no equal opportunity for the men and women in all sectors.

The question of the equity in community forest management comes; it often gives the notion of the equal opportunity for the women the disadvantaged and the lower caste's people. It is related to the gender balance participation in FUG and it basically rests on the leadership, decision-making and the representing the certain interest group. Gender and equity has been the major agenda of the contemporary debate on the people's participation in the community forestry Programme.

The policy seems considering women as the single interest group as we know women as an interest group from the gender balance participation's perspective .Both policy and the implementation strategies and programmers of the donor agencies have focused to make better status of women in forest management and tried to make at least taken participation of them in executive committee of the user groups (Bennett, 2003). But nominal discussion has been made so far about the equity among the women or intra women equity. But in reality women is not the homogenous group in every respect. The woman of the user's household doesn't have the same types of access and opportunities and constraints to make the desired involvement in CFUG activities.

Within the women they have the diverse interest according to the caste, economic status, household position, educational status and age group Singh 2002.But those minority women who have the dominant figure in the society are getting the easy access in the man of certain part of the women's representatives in FUG' beneficial activities such as training. In reality they don't represents or make it beneficial for all the women who also have the same kind of the right. The women of a blacksmith household, women of the landless household and the regular forest user women etc. are not getting chance or getting less chance. In the country, women of the elite class, women member of the village level figures, educated women who is not related to the forest as rest of the community women are getting the privileges in the name of the women's participation (GoN/N, 2002). That is the reality the real user, poor, lower caste and occupation caste group's women have been excluded from making any meaningful intervention. Thus it is easy access of the all types or basically

disadvantaged groups' women seems most necessary to make possible the real essence of the women's participation.

2.1.6 Second Generation, and 'Social Equity', Issue of the Community Forestry

Second-generation issue refers to the unequal power relation between Rich and poor, high and low caste, women and men and so on. The social issue has been considered as the Social equity issue of the community forestry. The agenda of the equity has been focal point of the social issue (Winrock, 2002).

According to the Gilmour and Fisher (1991), from two different reasons equity is related to the community forestry. First is the program should benefit various interest groups in community. The membership in CFUG doesn't adequately represent poor and occupation caste group's participation. They have not the equal access due to various reasons (i.e. social hierarchy) in the intra CFUG activities, mainly in benefit sharing and decision-making. The issue of the intra CFUG equity is generally related to these problems. (Winrock, 2002; Grosen, 2002; Tiwari, 2002)

) Domination of the certain interest group in the FUG level

) Dominance of the executive committee on the user groups.

) Exclusion of the some community member from the user groups.

) Decision making process and less chance to for the rest of the interest group (men dominates the women)

) Distribution of the forest product among the members, which are against the interest of the resource poor members.

) Traditional value of the caste, class ethnicity and gender.

) Dominance of elite and high caste group's users in executive committee.

) Inadequate representation and the virtually non-involvement of all interest groups in setting institutional rules and arrangements.

The second is 'the political reason'. The philosophical argument's community forestry is aimed to meet the need of the diverse group of the society. It must insure the disadvantaged group's people's access to by the policy level and empower them to make equal control in CFUG.

The word 'community' in the community forestry indicates a homogenous group having common interests. But the community members are diverse in terms of their occupation, wealth, education and the caste/ethnicity although it may be a homogenous group in terms of physical characteristics such as geography. The issue of the intra CFUG equity is very important where the members of the community are diverse in terms of the socio-cultural and economic factor. Within a community there are the groups of the people who have the same interest common characteristics in certain thing; this is termed as the interest group (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991). With respect to even the forest management too, the identification of the needs roles and authority of all interest group within a user group in crucial to maintain the intra-CFUG equity.

In terms of the caste, the caste based social stratification has created the unequal access/opportunities of the people within the community forestry, as the poor and the occupational caste group's (mental worker, shoe-maker, tailor etc.) People are often ignored in the decision making process of the community forestry. In most of the Nepali society, caste/ethnic group is the key element in maintaining the social diversity, where another equally important category is the diversity in terms of the gender. Which directly further effects a distribution of the goods and benefit and making participation in other activities of the FUG (Winrock, 2002).

The cause is the community level's powerful people's domination upon the common property resource. FUG is not often comprised of household of the diverse social economic status and diverse forest based interest. Participation itself doesn't always secure all kinds of the community's people's involvement. Because it is a vague term and its notion doesn't secure all people's power over the decision-making and benefit sharing (Fisher, 2000). But it is incomplete to secure the all interest groups peoples participation equally socially disadvantaged people's (such as the poor, women and so called low caste) access has still in question. In EC, generally poor women and disadvantaged people are often ignored and decision-making. Community forestry often

unsuccessful to secure the basic needs of the poor and low caste peoples basic needs because of the elite and high caste people's domination in FUG. Economically disadvantaged groups may lose access to VITAL resources.

〕 Economically disadvantaged groups are often excluded from the membership.

〕 Member in user group are predominant from the economically advantaged

Participation in the community forestry can be better understood as the 'environmental cosmism' because caste has become the major determinant of the exclusion and inclusion of the people in community forestry. The term 'environmental Justice' also concerns to the equitable distribution of the resource, fair treatment of people of all races, culture and income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of the environmental law, regulation and policies (Adhikari, 2003).

2.2   Evolution of the Community Forest Management Policy

People have a certain relation with the forest and certain mechanism of the forest management based on particular environment and people's culture. Traditional, indigenous forest management have been practiced from several hundred years ago in Nepal (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991), which has been based on the practical experiences of the community dwellers that differs from community to community in terms of culture, religion, knowledge system and living pattern. The traditional mechanism of forest management has been transmitted from generation to generation as a wealth of knowledge. Such knowledge and experiences have taught users how forest should be managed in the interest of the community (Dukum and Lis, 1999).Rural Nepali economy is highly based on agriculture, although subsidiary occupations are government and private job, their main occupation is agriculture and livestock raising.

Therefore the most important natural resource for them forest resource for various reasons (i.e. daily animal feeding, firewood for cooking and pole for making house) (Amatya and Shrestha, 2002). The panchayat forest regulation

Act, 1978 failed to ensure or involve all the users of the forest in the management due to various regions in its implementation of the more than 14 years. The forest Act, 1993 therefore focus on to strength the CF approach by repealing the all previously existing forest legislation, providing a legal. Earlier experiences with different political turmoil, population growth, regulatory enforcement and adjustments, excessive dependence of the people over forest resources, and a paradigmatic shift in global development thinking are some of the other factors that contributed to evolve it to the present scenario of decentralization and devolution. CF in Nepal evolved through an interaction of multiplicity of factors. This stems from a sense of collective spirit embodied in Nepalese society through generations. There were frequent cases, particularly in the hills, of communities having been involved in the conservation of forests and regulating of forest resources. Earlier statutes have been specifically harmful to the development and conservation of the Nepalese forests. Their main shortcomings stem from their indifference to, or failure to address, the needs and aspirations of the people who continued to depend on forest products for their very subsistence.

The Private Forests Nationalization Act of 1957 brought forests, which were earlier perceived to be private, under state jurisdiction. Forest Act 1961 and Forest Protection Special Arrangement Act of 1967 failed to democratize the regulation of forests. Couple with population growth and government's continued inability towards effective protection, and misappropriations all led to consistent decline in the forest cover. The National Forestry Plan of 1976 listed the major constraints and proposed policies to tackle them. It recognized the critical forestry situation of the time and laid down as objectives for forest management the restoration of the balance of nature, economic mobilization, practices of scientific management, development of technology and promotion of public co-operation.

The CF thrust followed the formulation of Panchayat Forest Rules and Panchayat Protected Forest Rules in 1978. The CF project was introduced in 29 hill districts with assistance from the World Bank. CF was also promoted with bilateral assistance. Later, CF was also tried in 14 Terai districts with World Bank assistance (Tiwari 1990:113,120).

2.2.1 Master Plan for the Forestry Sector

The first national CF workshop held in 1987 contributed to the prioritization of the CF program in the MPFS (Acharya et al. 1998:2). The idea to employ a program approach to support primary and supportive programs was a turning point in Nepal's history of forestry sector policy The MPFS, prepared between 1986 and 1988 and approved in 1989 provides a 25-year policy and planning framework for the forestry sector. The main feature of the MPFS is an integrated and program-oriented approach. The long-term objectives of the MPFS include the following (MFSC 2000:7).

) To protect land against degradation and other effects of ecological imbalance

) To contribute to local and national economic growth

) To meet the people's basic needs for forest products on a sustained basis

) To conserve ecosystems and genetic resources

The plan guides forestry development within the comprehensive framework of six primaries and six supportive to achieve its objectives.

2.2.2 Primary Forestry Development Programs (MFSC, 2000:7)

) Supportive Community and Private forestry

) National and Leasehold forestry

) Wood-based industries

) Medicinal and aromatic plants

) Soil conservation and watershed management

) Conservation of ecosystem and genetic resources.

2.2.3 Forestry Development Programs (MFSC 2000:7)

) Policy and legal reforms

〉 Institutional reforms

〉 Human resource development

〉 Research and extension

〉 Forest resources information system and management planning

〉 Monitoring and evaluation.

〉 Community Forest related Provision in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990

Part 4 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990 contains Directive Principles and Policies of the State. No cases, however, can be filed in any court regarding the compliance of the State with the principles and policies. Selected provisions of the Constitution include (GoN 1990:13-15).

Article 25 (1): It shall be the chief objective of the State to promote conditions of welfare on the basis of the principles of an open society, by establishing a just system in all aspects of national life, including social, economic and political life, while at the same time protecting the lives, property and liberty of the people.

Article 26 (3): The State shall pursue a policy of mobilizing the natural resources and heritage of the country in a manner, which might be useful and beneficial to the interest of the nation.

Article 26 (4): The State shall give priority to the protection of the environment and also to the prevention of its further damage due to physical development activities by increasing the awareness of the general public about environmental cleanliness, and the State shall also make arrangements for the special protection of the rare wildlife, the forests and the vegetation.

The constitutional provisions were conducive to promoting CF, in particular with respect to using the forest resources in the interest of the nation through establishing a just system of distribution of the resources through ecologically sound manner.

2.3 Policy and Regulatory Environment of Community Forestry

Constitution of the stat, forest act, local self act, forest regulation, master plan of the forestry sector, five year planning of the state etc are policy, rules and regulation of forestry sector which creates policy and Regulatory environment of community forestry for its management and development.

2.3.1 Forest Act 1993

Forest Act 1993 evidences a marked shift towards democratizing the regulation of forests. The 1993 Forest Act provides the legal framework for CF and CFUGs in Nepal (LFP 2003). It has repealed conventional forestry laws and paved way for liberalizing forestry initiatives in the Kingdom. Among 13 chapters, Chapter 5 (sections 25-30) and Chapter 9 (sections 41-45) of the Act furnish provisions relating to CF processes (GoN 1993). The Act empowers local people for their participation in decision making and sharing of benefits of forest resources (Lamichhane et al. 2000:7).

Community forest OP forms the basis of such handover and communities may make timely amendments in such plans. Under the Act, the District Forest Officers may validate FUGs constituted for being desirous to collectively develop and manage specified forests and utilize products. The Act authorizes the District Forest Officer to hand over portions of national forests so that communities may conserve and manage the forests and adopt independent distribution mechanisms for forest products. The user-groups themselves can penalize their members contravening their codes. The Act also establishes precedence of CF over leasing.

2.3 Forest Regulations and Other Provisions

Forest Regulations 1995 is the procedural law that enables materializing the Forest Act and relevant policies on CF. Chapter 4 of the Regulations stipulates procedures and provisions concerning CF. The provisions and procedures laid out in the rules impart increased autonomy of forest user-groups that are real actors of CF, and promote a changeover of governmental role from policing to facilitation. Similarly, the Department of Forests (DoF) has prepared CF directives in 1995. The directives further simplify matters of determining

community forests, formation of users-groups, and handing over of community forests. It further clarifies on registering of users-group, preparation of OPs, establishment of industries, transportation of forest products and withdrawal of community forests and so forth.

2.3.3 Five-Year Plans

Periodic planning in Nepal started in 1956 and infrastructure development was the prime focus till the Fifth Five-year Plan period. The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) adopted poverty alleviation as its sole objective. The plan committed to launch sect oral poverty alleviation programs in a co-coordinated, unified, and effective manner. To this, the Plan had adopted, among others, a strategy to affect a high, sustained, and poverty alleviation-oriented economic growth through the integrated development and leadership of agriculture and forestry. The Ninth Plan adopted the MPFS for the planned development of the forestry sector.

The Ninth Plan adopted a policy of perpetuating supplies of forest products (FPs) to the ordinary public through communal management of forests. As a sub-sect oral Programme of the plan, community and private forestry aims to promote employment and income- generation opportunities to marginal families. It further promotes accommodating non-timber forest products (NTFPs) under community forest management.

As a sub-sect oral Programme of the Tenth Five-year Plan (2002-2007), CF aims to promote employment and income-generation opportunities to poor and disadvantaged families. It further promotes non-timber forest products under CF management (NPC 2002 a: 180-187).

2.3.4 Three years in term planning   (2067-2070)

Three years in term planning started to (2067-2070) in this period worldwide economic crisis, climate change other related problem faces the world. Poverty reduction and income generating activities included in forestry programme. People   involve participation in forestry programme to reduce the climate change and poverty reduction. To this, the Plan had adopted, among others, a strategy to affect a high, sustained, and poverty alleviation-oriented economic growth through the integrated development and leadership of

agriculture and forestry. It further promotes accommodating non-timber forest products under community forest management.

2.3.5 Rural Development through Community Forestry

Jackson and Ingles (1994) observed that effective participation of local people is essential for making community development work.Community Forestry encourages the participation of local people in decision-making by:

) Encouraging local participation in implementing solutions;

) Providing a direct a local source of funds for community development;

) Strengthening local links between development and forest conservation.

) Providing local control over forest management;

) Encouraging local participation in defining needs and setting priorities for development;

Dev *et al.* (2004:208-217) identified that FUGs community development activities have led to improved village level infrastructure in the majority of FUGs studied. The main examples are as follows:

) Construction of community halls/agricultural group halls supported by donation of construction materials and funds

) Contributions for construction of temple and monastery

) Village electrification

) Drinking water supply

) Support to schools in the form of teachers' salaries, fund and timber contribution for constructing school building

FUGs carry out many community development activities on their own. Construction of village trails; small bridges, community building, schools, drinking water, and temples are the examples of community infrastructure supported by CFUGs (Dev *et al*. 2004: 213). Evidences show that a large

amount of FUG fund is being spent on various community development activities.

2.3.6 Poverty and Poor

In the context of Nepal, poor are those who live in small huts having no ventilation, no land or having small piece of land, getting low diet, having unhealthybody,daily,wageearners,illiterates,sociallydisadvantaged/marginalize deprived of education, health care and modern facilities. In other words, person who is the most vulnerable to shock, stress and seasonality is a poor of Nepal .There are no definite words to define the term 'poor'. Nepal is an economically poor country in comparison to USA. People of Karnali may be poor when we compare them with the people of Kathmandu. However, even in Karnali zone, there are rich and poor. Hence, poor itself is a relative thing and will remain forever (Kanel and Niraula 2004: 26). It is only its magnitude that matters.

According to World Bank, poverty is hunger, lack of shelter, being sick and not being able to see a doctor, not being able to go school and not knowing how to read, not having a job. It is fear for the future; living one day at a time, losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water, and is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom (http://www.worldbank.org).

Poverty has two dimensions - low income, which is insufficient to maintain a dignified life, and low level of human capabilities, which restricts a citizen's options to lead a life of his or her choosing. Poverty is a form of deprivation with strong interactive linkage to other form such as physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness. It is a state of economic, social and psychological deprivation occurring among people of countries lacking sufficient ownership, control or access to resources to maintain minimal acceptable standards of living (http://www.undp.org).

2. 3. 7 Challenges of Community Forestry Programme in Nepal

In Nepal, at the moment, an average of two CFUGs is being formed every day and they are given authority and responsibility to manage and use the national forest resources in the form of community forests (Nurse et al. 2004). If appropriately mobilized, CFUGs can be used for any kind of development activity. Potential of disseminating information to rural people through CFUGs

is enormous. Besides, these CFUGs can be very effective organizations for delivering services in the remote part of Nepal.

Nepal is one of the pioneer programs of participatory Forest Management in the world. The innovative CF policy has widely implemented in the Middle hills areas. Nepal's forest policy has provided a platform to practice and learn more from community forestry and many more have been achieved in terms of capital formation, governance and policy reform, community empowerment and social change (Suman 2005:39). Many CFUGs have been operating for several years and have become firmly institutionalized. They represent an effective local development institution, increasingly involved in wider community development activities, often networking with a range of government and non- government groups.

Community forests handed over to communities are natural capital. Nepal's community forestry has proved that communities are able to protect, manage and utilize forest resources sustainably (Pokharel and Nurse 2004:20). Evidence shows that there are positive changes in forest condition once they are handed over to the communities (Malla 1997; Branne; Kanel and Kandel 2004:7). The availability of the forest product also increased, with a concurrent reduction in the time spent for collecting forest products. It was also found that an increased number of FUGs have harvested timber (19% increase), fuelwood (18% increase) and grasses (9% increase) (Pokharel and Nurse, 2004:20).

Certain groups in community forestry are able to gain access to and benefit from collective actions. This is because socio-economic attributes of households like land holding, livestock holding, and family size have direct impact on the extraction of forest resources and some of FUGs rule and regulations also tried to exclude poor societies. This exclusion from the forest use is a serious challenge to community forestry management and poverty alleviation (K. C. 2004:39).

In Nepal, community forestry has been taken as an innovative approach towards devolution of power and responsibilities of forest management from national government to the local communities. Despite rhetoric of devolution, the actual implementation of Nepal's community forestry policy is principally

constrained by the problem of governance and institutional structure in public sector institutions (Dahal 2003:17).

The main challenge lies in integrating CF policy and practice with democratic governance and livelihood imperatives (Kanel and Kandel 2004:57). No group in the absence of democratic exercise can function effectively and smoothly. This mostly offsets the weaker section such as women, disadvantaged group and very poor thus depriving them of their share of benefits (Joshi 2003:21). Poor, women and other marginalized groups of people are not getting an equitable share of benefits (Pokharel and Nurse 2004:19-29).

Evidences show that poor households have not received adequate opportunity for training package offered in community forestry intervention. The majority of CFUGs are not taking advantage of community forests to improve the livelihoods of its members (LFP, 2003: 49). Despite large-scale expansion of CF in Nepal, there is no clear and consistent contribution to the livelihoods, especially of the poor (Neupane 2003:55). The poor have not also been given sufficient loans from the FUG fund. Besides, the physical infrastructures constructed through FUG's funds have also not benefited the poor as compared with the better-off members of the same FUG (Pokharel and Nurse 2004:19-29).FUG use funds collected from fees and selling timber to develop some social activities like construction of irrigation canal, and temple. These have no direct implication to landless and lower caste households (K. C. 2004:39).

Forest products sharing mechanism is not well-defined in the OP of many FUGs. Although it is the role of the general assembly to decide the distribution mechanism, the executive committee takes most of the decisions regarding benefit-sharing mechanisms. As the representation of poor and disadvantaged group in the executive committee is member, the sharing mechanism could hardly fulfill the demands of forest products for the poor and disadvantaged groups (Kanel and Kandel 2004:11).

Decision-making is a fundamental part in community forestry. The success or failure of community forestry is based mainly upon decisions made by user groups/committees (Paudel 1997:23). Failures of many community

forestry user groups are due to wrong decisions. The Koidim community forest of Tanahu and Khordanda community forest of Lalitpur are such examples (Shrestha 1995:101).

Active participation of poor, women, and disadvantaged groups in decision making is critical for effective community forestry management and equitable benefit distribution among the users. Poor households, especially those without land, cannot use fodder, leaf litter, and agricultural inputs from CF, which are benefits enjoyed mainly by better-off households. Also, timber is mostly purchased and used by better-off households since the poor households do not have the need or ability to pay for timber. The poorest households do not benefit from the harvesting due to lack of a legal provision to sell unused products (Kanel and Kandel 2004:61). The distribution system in community forestry is criticized for failing to provide more benefits to the poor households (Malla 2001).

Equity is a serious issue in the success of CF programme. CF must be understood as a process of equitable redistribution of local resource ownership, management and access (Bhatta 2002:116). According to Tiwari (2002:71), equity problems are rooted in: (a) traditionally existing attitude to discriminate on the basis of caste, class, sex and ethnicity; (b) significantly low level of awareness about CF policy; (c) inadequate representation and virtually non-involvement of all interest groups in setting institutional rules and arrangements; (d) lack of innovative and livelihood supportive forest management interventions and (e)Control and dominance of executive committee and elite therein over user group. Even most transparent user groups often practice 'equality' rather than equity in sharing of costs and benefits of forest management. Therefore, CFUGs need to make more democratic efforts to improve their organizational, social and technical capacities to eliminate such shortfalls (Tiwari 2002:71).

CHAPTER- THREE
METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the detail of the procedures adopted for the present research. The details of the research design, data collection techniques, nature and sources of the data analysis techniques and the introduction of the study areas have been presented.

3.1 Research Design

The study has adopted the 'descriptive' research design. A descriptive research design has been used because the goal of the study is to describe qualitatively the people's involvement in the community forest management rather than comparatively and explicatively. The study is based on the qualitative and quantitative interpretation of the gathered data by different table, chart, and figure. So the descriptive research design is the best for the present study. The study describes policy related to the women's involvement in the community forestry (with reference to the OP and the constitution of the studied FUGs), the field level reality, how they are participating and the different hindrances of the women to be a part of the forest management as according to their socio-cultural and economic differentiations. Therefore this research design is helpful to describe the women related policy and reality in the community forestry management system.

3.2 Sampling procedure

This study was adopted stratified sampling technique. The people involved in community forest Programme, different groups of people cast, age ethics group policy making, implementation or the people engaged in forest Programme with special focus on user group were interviewed through checklist method .This method selected different characteristics of people . Structured questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative as well as qualitative information. Limited number of respondents was interviewed, taken on group discussion and field observation and some other people unstructured question was done for the primary data collection and other required information for the study. The study area pyauly village development committee there

is eleven community user groups at nine wards. The analysis of the study is exploratory as well as descriptive in nature.

3.3 Nature and Sources of Data

There is no doubt that this study based on primary as well as secondary information. The primary information collected through field survey using different data collection methods such as observation, questionnaire survey and interview. Similarly, the secondary data are collected from community forest relate organizations, libraries; publication literature published and unpublished papers and articles.

3.4 Data collection Techniques

The secondary data were collected from the published and unpublished books, documents, studies carried out before related to the present topic, the constitution and the operational plan of the studied FUGs. The other sources were the different government legislation, regulation, Acts, operational guidelines of the community forestry, bulletin published by the government forest office and etc. Especially following methods of the data collection was adopted to collect the primary data from field study.

3.4.1 Observation

In the course of fieldwork of this study, simple observation was done. The conditions of forests, the general and committee meeting of user group women's role in the meeting and women's participation on forest products collection were observed in this study. House constructions and condition of firewood storage also was observed. So the observation was proved more fruitful to find the reality in this study.

3.4.2 Interview

Several interviews have been conducted during the field works. Some key informant interviews (individuals) and some group interviews were taken. Individuals of former and current executive committee (EC) members, women of the different groups were taken interviews. Group interview were taken Monthly meeting. Interview helped to understand the men's concept toward women's involvement,

people participation different constraints of the different groups' of people their knowledge about FUG, forest management and their understanding of the forest policy.

3.4.3 Focused Group Discussion

Information about a community can be best obtained by looking separately at the groups of the people with common interest. FGD provides an in-depth discussion by listening of the people of different age, ethnic group, on certain topic (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991). For women it provides an opportunity to express them about the topic. And for researcher it is very useful to understand the diversity of perception and opinion about definite topic.

Discussion were held between the member's of forest user's groups (FUGs) for the present condition of the groups, rules and regulation, management and development practices of FUGs and the past and present of community forests. Emphasis was given to the women's role on managing the forests.

3.4.4 Household Survey

For the detail information of the respondents household survey has been conducted. 10 percent user's households has been taken as sample in the present study i.e. 1148 total user's household and 1 ward in the study area, female user 43 and male user's 57 in 1 ward has been taken as sample. The sampling households have been chosen by conducting stratified random sampling method according to their caste, ethnicity, education and other entity and backgrounds

3.4.5 Tools of Data collection

a. Semi-structured question prepared for women ethic group of people who involve in forestry programmed.
b. Check list for focus group discussion.

CHAPTER - FOUR

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY AREA

This chapter discusses of socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, participation of forest users on different community forestry development activities, CFUG fund creation and utilization. It also presents the awareness of the users in different term of the community forestry as well right and duties towards the CF.

4. The Study Area

The study was conducted in Bhojpur district, which is located in the eastern development region of Nepal. The district was selected purposively because of the following considerations:

- The district has an on-going user-group-based community forestry program implemented.

- The district represents a typical hilly region of the country so the findings could be applied and may be useful to other similar districts of Nepal.

- Relevant secondary data are substantially available in the District Forest Office (DFO).

- The area is accessible by Green Road.

- The researcher is acquainted with the district and local situation.

4.1 Location of the Study Area

The location of study area is in Bhojpur District of Nepal. Bhojpur district is situated in eastern development region, which is developed in the trade and industrial sector and more fertile land among the sixteen districts of koshi zone of Nepal.

Bhojpur District lies between Sankhuwasabha, Dhankuta,Khotang, udayaphare and Solukhambu. It is 113 km away from Regional Office Dhankuta . Bhojpur District has the area is 1,507 sq. km. The climate of Bhojpur district varies from sub-tropical to tropical temperature and also there is mild and cool temperature

in the hilly area. The district receives an average rainfall. It has one municipalityes and 63 VDCs, 2 parliamentary representative election sectors. The district headquarters is Bhojpur Bazar. It is lies on the koshi zone. The total population of the district is 2,03018 of which 97,762 are male and 1,05,226 are female (CBS 2011). The literacy rate of this district is 53.9 percent. The female literacy rate is 43.4 percent whereas the male literacy rate is 67.5 percent. The occupation agriculture plays very the important role for the livelihood of the peoples of this district. Main castes of this district include Rai, Nawer, Brahmin, Chhetri, Kami (Blacksmith), Sunar (Goldsmith), Damai (Tailor) and Sarki (Cobbler) the study area total population male is 1391 and female population is 1476.

4.2 Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents

The majority of the household respondents were male and belonged to the middle age group. Predominantly, respondents were married. The major occupation of the respondents was farming. The large majority of the respondents belonged to medium-sized family with 4 to 6 members. Most of the respondents were literate through either formal or non-formal education and had medium-sized farm.

4.2.1 Demographic structure by ward and sex

The total households of this VDC is 1148 and the total population is 1756 among which 856 are male and 900 are female (CBS-2011). The following table has present the ward wise and sex wise distribution of population in table 1.

Table 1 Population by ward and Sex

Ward No	Total HHs	Male	Female	Total Population	percentage
1	156	102	112	214	100
2	146	98	102	200	100
3	89	95	92	187	100
4	172	143	185	328	100
5	142	89	96	185	100
6	96	87	97	184	100
7	104	68	75	143	100
8	156	94	47	141	100
9	87	80	94	174	100
Total	1148	856	900	1756	100

Source: CBS 2011.

From the above table, it is clear that the average household size of VDC, which is equal to national average. It is also shows the population of female is 51.80 percent in pyauli VDC.

4.2.2 Age Groups of the Respondents

The age of the respondents varied from 18 to 70, with an average of 45 years. Further, the respondents have been classified into three categories, viz., young adult and old as shown in Table 2. Among the various age groups, the majority (61%) falls in the age group of 26 to 50 years. The reason for higher proportion of the respondent in this group was due to more intensive attachment with forest activities. This group is

most active and its involvement in all CF management activities is higher. A similar observation was reported by Thakur (2001:63) and Kunwar (2002:36). It was also useful to find out the opinion of young generation and experienced upper age groups in different forestry activities, as they comprise 11 percent and 28 percent respectively, among all the age groups.

Table 2 Age Structure of Respondents

Age group	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Below 25 years	11	11.00
From 26 to 50 years	61	61.00
Above 50 years	28	28.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

4.2.3 Gender

Gender is an integral and inseparable part of rural livelihoods. The study was intended to collect information from large number of female respondents because they are the prime users and they know how to conserve and manage the forest and fulfill the needs efficiently and sustainable. They are the local experts for quality fuel wood and fodder, and it is generally their responsibility to collect these products. But in the list of household there was no name of female household. Though the efforts were made to collect more information from female members, the percentage of the female respondents was only 15 (Table 3) owing to their household workload and lack of time. The proportion of male respondents who participated during interviews was 85 percent.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Male	85	85.00
Female	15	15.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

4.2.4 Ethnicity

The study area has different group of people such as Brahmin, Chettri, Rai, Nawer Dalit, (Kami, Damai, Sunar) etc. The study area has heterogeneous society in terms of caste and ethnicity. There are multitude of castes and ethnic groups . There were hill migrants ethnic groups. The study area consists of a multicasts and multi cultural community. The detailed ethnicity composition is given in Table 4.

Table 4: Ethnic Affiliation

Cast or ethnicity	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Brahmin	35	35.00
Nawer	40	40.00
Rai,	10	10.00
Dalit	2	2.00
Chhetri	11	11.00
Others	2	2.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

4.2.5 Civil Status of the Respondents

Table 5 presents the civil status of the respondents. Married respondents constituted more than eighty five percent (85%), while single and widowed were less than ten (10%) and (5%) percent, respectively.

Table 5: Civil Status of the Respondents

Civil status	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Married	85	85.00
Unmarried	10	10.00
Widow/widow/ed	5	5.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

4.2.6 Educational Status

Education is an important indicator of development, having multiplier effect on community forest management. It increases awareness in the people towards their socioeconomic condition empowering them to act towards the changes to use the opportunities. Respondents' educational level is presented in Table 6. It was found that most of the respondents (86%) were literate through either formal or informal education. Informal education refers to non-formal adult education without schooling and illiterate refers to those respondents who were not able to get either formal or non-formal education and could not read and write. Majority of them (32%) had primary level of education. (16 %) of the respondents had informal education and college education while 7 percent were illiterate. Only 12 percent had secondary level of education. Furthermore, only 14 percent of the respondents had lower secondary level of education. Literacy rate in the area was found higher as compared to the average literacy rate (59.9%) of the district (CBS 2011).

Table 6: Educational Status of the Respondents

Category	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Illiterate	7	7.00
Literate by adult education	16	16.00
Primary	32	32.00
Lower secondary	14	14.00
Secondary	12	12.00
Higher Education	19	19.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

4.2.7 Occupational Status

The respondents' occupational status is presented in Table 7. The majority of the respondents were in agricultural occupation (71%). The rest of them were in service and teaching 6 percent each, merchants 5 percent, tailor 4 percent, blacksmith 3% and mason or carpenters 2%. At least four each was goldsmith, laborer and in social service. Many rural people can be described as being in an 'energy trap' i.e. having to maintain subsistence through high levels of energy expenditure leaving little time and energy for other activities (Longhurst, 1997). They are locked into low productivity occupations (Jafry, 2000

Table 7: Occupational Status of the Respondents

Occupation	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Agriculture	71	71.00
Service	6	6.00
Social service	1	1.00
Teacher	6	6.00
Tailor	4	4.00
Blacksmith	3	3.00
Goldsmith	1	1.00
Maison/Carpenter	2	2.00
Marchant	5	5.00
Labors	1	1.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

4.2.8 Household Size

More than half of the respondents (58%) had a medium size family (4 to 7 members). The average family size was 5.79 and the range varied from 2 to 10. The average family size in the area was found more compared to the district average of 4.60 members per household (CBS 2011).

Table 8: Household Size

Household size	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Small (Up to 3)	28	28.00
Medium (4 to 7)	58	58.00
Large (7+)	14	14.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

4.2.9 Land Holding Size

Landholding size refers to the area of land owned by an individual household from where they derive income. Nearly half of the respondents (49%) owned 6 to 10 Ropine of farmland (Table 9). Only 11 percent owned more than 30 Ropine . The area was not found better in terms of landholding than the rest of the district average where 40.52 percent of households owned 30 - 40 Rapine of farmland.

Table 9: Landholding Status of Respondents

Land holding size	Respondents	
	Number(f)	Percentage
Very small	23	23.00
Small 06 - 10 Ropine.)	49	49.00
Medium 11 to 30 Ropine.	17	17.00
Large > 30 Ropine..)	11	11.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2011.

4.3 Users' Participation in Community Forestry Activities

Communities are not simply a technical process; it is rather also a process of socioeconomic change based on structure and nature of societal justice .Communities are important spearheads of sustainability in forest landscapes. Conservation of forest ecosystem and their diversity has relied heavily on participation of local community. Participation is the voluntary involvement of people in self-determined change (FAO, 1989) in which the people are directly and actively involved in planning, implementation, management   of Programme. Participation in this study refers to the involvement of forest users in various activities of the CF program such as formation of user groups, preparation and implementation of OPs, and on-going management of Programme.

4.3.1 Participation in Forestry Programme group Formation Process

Respondents' participation in various activities during the formation of Forestry group Programme Formation is presented in Table 10. The majority of the respondents (84%) were aware of the Forestry Programme group Formation, while 52 percent of them attended in Forestry Programme group formation process. Among the respondents, only few participated in executive committee selection (1%) only. Likewise, those who participated in meetings and discussions were 4 and 3 percent respectively. Thirty eight percent of the respondents participated in all activities. Only few were involved in both selecting executives and discussions. On the other hand, 4 percent participated in meetings and discussions while 48 percent did not participate in Forestry program formation process. The reasons cited for non-participation were: 'was not at home', 'was not informed', 'did not have time', and 'other member of the family participated'. One of the reasons given indicates that other members of the family also participate in the Forestry Programme group formation process. This trend could improve the participation of the users. The result clearly indicates that Forestry Programme group formation process could not include a wider mass.

Table 10:   Participation of Respondents in Forestry Programme group   Formation

Types of participation	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Attendance in the meeting	4	4.00
Executive committee selection	1	1.00
Discussions	3	3.00
All of the above	38	38.00
Attending meeting and discussion	4	4.00
Selecting executives and discussion	2	2.00
Did not participate	48	48.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Quality outcome and sustainability of CF program hinges on the level of mass awareness among the participants. The process of selection and organization of Forestry Programme group formation process   involves social mobilization, which is a key step and raises awareness about the program. Adequate social mobilization can also help in empowering the marginalized people within the community by making them aware of their status and rights leading to their real participation in the program. Awareness among resource users being a critical factor in the success of the CF program, it is of utmost importance that the facilitators of this program invest significant time and resources in building and raising this. This would also ensure their strong presence in the executive committee, which at present is just nominal in terms of number and/or expression and assertion. The result demands that the facilitators of the program (program implementers) especially the district forest office should focus more on social mobilization aspect during the FUG formation process in the area.

4.3.2 Participation in OP Preparation

Participation of the respondents in OP preparation is presented in Table 11. Sixty percent of the respondents were aware about their operational plans. Majority of them (51%) participated in various activities during OP preparation. About one-third (33%) participated in all the activities of OP preparation while 9, 1, and 2 percent participated only during discussions, field survey and preparation of rules and regulations respectively. Likewise, only 5 and 1 percent participated in discussions, survey, and preparation of rules and regulations and survey respectively. Nearly half (49%) of the respondents did not participate in the process of OP preparation.

Table 11: Participation of Respondents in OP Preparation

Type of participation	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Discussion	9	9.00
Field survey	1	1.00
Preparation of rules and regulations	2	2.00
All of the above activities	33	33.00
Discussion and survey	5	5.00
Survey and preparation of rules and regulations	1	1.00
Did not participate	49	49.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Attempts to manage the forest resources in community forests are likely to succeed if the users involved support the OPs. Significant role of forest users in the development of OPs is important for the successful implementation of the plan. The

findings show that significant number of the users did not participate in the preparation of the OPs is useful to the program implementers and other stakeholders in the district. This would enable them to make the concerned users aware and become involved in the development of the plans so that the approved OPs will be successfully implemented.

The large numbers of the respondents (93%) perceive that they were aware of the constitution of CFUGs. Table 12 presents the awareness of the respondents regarding the provisions of the approved constitutions. Almost all of the respondents (93%) knew the chairpersons of their CFUGs. Likewise, 57 percent and 63 percent of the respondents knew the number of users and the number of members in FUCs of their respective CFUGs, respectively.

Table 12:   Awareness Regarding the Content and Provisions of Constitution

Provisions of constitution	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
CFUG chair person		
Knew the name	93	93.00
Did not know the name	7	7.00
Total	100	100.00
Number of users in CFUG		
Knew the number	57	57.00
Did not know the number	43	43.00
Total	100	100.00
Number of members in FUC		
Knew the number	63	63.00
Did not know the number	37	37.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Awareness of the respondents regarding their rights, roles and duties towards CF is presented in Table 13. The majority 75, 70, and 85 percent of the respondents were aware about their rights, roles and duties respectively towards CF.

Table 13: Awareness Regarding the Rights, Roles and Duties of the Respondents to CF

Category	No of Respondents	
	Number(f)	Percentage
Rights		
Aware	85	85..00
Not aware	15	15.00
Total	100	100.00
Roles		
Aware	80	80.00
Not aware	20	20.00
Total	100	100.00
Duties		
Aware	75	75.00
Not aware	25	25.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Respondents' awareness regarding some of the specific provisions of their approved operational plans (OPs.) is tabulated in Table 13. Majority of the respondents (52%) were not aware of the specified month for coal collection in their operational plans. Similarly, 70 and 65 percent of the respondents were not aware of the area of community forests (CFs.) and number of blocks in community forests respectively. Although 69 percent were aware of the price of a bundle of firewood in their operational plans. The results indicate that majority of the users do not care about the various provisions of operational plans. It also shows that users are only concerned about what they get from their community forests rather than the management aspects of the operational plans.

Table 14: Awareness Regarding the Content and Provisions in OPs Table

Provisions of OP	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Month of Coal collection		
Aware	42	42.00
Not aware	58	58.00
Total	100	100.00
Area of CF		
Aware	35	35.00
Not aware	65	65.00
Total	100	100.00
Blocks in CF		
Aware	38	38.00
Not aware	62	62.00
Total	100	100.00
Price of a bundle of firewood		
Aware	75	75.00
Not aware	25	25.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

The results discussed above clearly indicated that FUG formation process could not include a wider mass. Similarly, a significant number of the users did not participate in the preparation of OPs. The finding also revealed that users did not care much about the provisions of OPs showing that they were much concerned about what they get from their CFs rather than the management aspects of the OPs. The results demand that the Programme implementers should focus more on social mobilization aspect and take more time to discuss the provisions of OPs during the CF handing over process in the area.

4.3.3 Participation in Implementation of Operational Plans (OPs.)

Table 15: Participation of the Respondents in OP Implementation

Item	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Did not participate	17	17.00
Participated	83	83.00
Total	100	100.00
	Multiple Responses	
Participation in activities	Number	Remarks
Forest Protection	87	
Plant production	7	
conservation	88	
Weeding	88	
Pruning	80	
Grass Cutting	73	
Natural regeneration management	51	
Timber stand Improvement	73	
Fire line construction /Maintenance	12	
Reasons for not participation	Number (f)	Percentage
Was not aware of it	04	57.15
Did not consider it important	02	28.57
Did not have time	01	14.28
Total	07	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 15 shows that the majority of the respondents (83%) participated in the implementation of OPs. The activities in which the respondents participated in were forest protection, plant production, plantation, weeding, pruning, thinning, natural regeneration management, timber stand improvement and fire line construction and/or maintenance. Approximately 87 percent of the respondents participated in forest protection; plantation, weeding, pruning, thinning and timber stand improvement while less participation was observed in plant production, natural regeneration management and fire line construction and maintenance.

Fifty-seven percent of the respondents who did not participate in OP implementation cited that they "were not aware of it" while other 28.57 percent, said "did not consider it as important". And the remaining 14.28 percent "did not get time ".The participation in forest protection clearly indicates that users are aware of the importance of their community forests. Data also shows that the participation is high in thinning and pruning activities rather than natural regeneration management, and fire line construction and maintenance. In most of the user-groups in the area, pruning

and thinning activities were the major source of firewood collection and distribution. Hence, high participation in those activities enabled them to meet the immediate need of firewood. On the other hand, less participation in other activities such as natural regeneration management, and fire line construction/ maintenance could be an indication that cultural treatments are carried out for the benefit of users but not for the benefit of the forests in many instances. This finding could help the program implementers to determine the causes and come up with appropriate measures to correct such problems so that all users can participate in the implementation of the OPs.

Table 16: Participation of the Male and Females Respondents in OP Implementation

Participation in OPs Plan activities	Male	Female
Forest Protection	8	3
Plant production	5	2
conservation	9	4
Weeding	4	2
Pruning	3	1
Grass Cutting	2	8
Natural regeneration management	3	2
Timber stand Improvement	7	4
Fire line construction /Maintenance	6	2
Total	47	28

Field Survey, 2015

The above table represent that the male involvement in CFUG group activities but the female participation in low because the female involvement in household work , lack of awareness, lack of education.

4.3.4 Participation in CFUG General Assembly

Participation may be an "end itself" to increase self-esteem, confidence and the individual sense of power or empowerment i.e. everybody's right to have a say in decision concerning their own lives (Lane, 1997; Mikkelsen, 1995). Participation is seen as an integral and inseparable aspect of any definition of development leading to a wider process of social transformation and potential challenge to existing power

structures. This study analyses the number and percentage of respondents through attendance in meeting in CFUG's General Assembly.

Participation of respondents in CFUG meetings is presented in Table 15. It showed that the vast majority of the respondents (81%) participated in FUG meetings. The majority (63.62%) attended meetings 1 to 5 times in a year, followed by 6 to 10 times a year (7.60%) and 10 and more times a year (18.78%). This finding indicates that generally FUG meetings are held 1 to 5 times a year. The researcher during the field visit observed that many users participate even in the monthly meetings of FUCs.

Table: 17: Participation of Respondents in CFUG Meeting (General Assembly)

Item	Respondents	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage
Participation		
Did not participate	12	12.00
Participated	88	88.00
Total	100	100.00
Attendance in the meeting		
1 to 5 times	63	63.62
6 to 10 times	7	7.60
11 and more times	18	19.78
Total	81	100.00
Reasons for non-participation		
User Committees' job	2	22.22
Did not consider important	2	22.22
Was not informed in time	5	55.56
Total	9	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

There were no similarities between the CFUGs to conduct the General Assembly. Some groups conducted the meeting less than necessary and some conducted more than necessary (Yadav, 2003). This system was also seen in the study area. Generally, the General Assembly should be conducted twice a year (in summer and in winter). If they could not conduct the General Assembly two times in a year but the compulsion is one time in summer. The household or representative who could not participate in the General Assembly has to pay fine. There are more groups, which conducted the General Assembly 1 time in a year. So the participation is high 67%, in the first category than other two categories. But the participation is 18% in third

category because the executive committee had decided to conduct the meeting with user group but not only the executive committee. In this way they have more than 11+ meetings due to the emergency meeting and the monthly meetings with all user so that they could be more aware about the ongoing management and decision-making process. Likewise, the second category is very small because those respondents whenever they would like to participate in the monthly meeting, they used to go there.

The reasons for not attending the meetings were the following: 'was not informed in time' 55.56%, 'did not consider important' (22.22%) and 'forest user committee's job' (22.22%). The reasons indicate that not all users were informed before the meetings and some of the users were not well aware about the importance of the FUG meetings.

4.3.4.1 Participation in Decision-making

Transparency in decision-making is a key component of a democratic governance system. In several instances, decision could be reached only through a negotiation process, which ideally requires full and transparent sharing of information by all stakeholders (Habermas1984). Absence of transparency means the members of FUG are denied their rights or are not interested in knowing about it or do not know what they are supposed to know (Bhatta 2002:95-123).

Decision-making is a crucial element for the success of any project. In the decision- making process, if majority are involved they feel projects to be their own. This research has found that participation is affected not only by those who make and implement decision but also by how decisions are made. Regarding the participation in decision-making, 81 percent of the respondents participated in decision-making process. Table 18 showed that more than forty percent of the respondents that participated in decision-making process perceive their participation as active. Nearly thirty-one percent of them perceived that their participation was moderate and other twenty five percent were inactive in decision-making process.

The reasons given for the non-participation in decision-making process was that 9 percent of the respondents were absent in the meeting .But the inactive

participation also just likes the non-participation in the meeting .In the reason of inactive participation were the following: "no body encouraged speaking" (17.39 %), and "Did not consider it important" (8.70%), users' committee job (26.08%). The remaining 47.83 percent expressed other reasons such as they did not know what to speak in the meetings (17.39%), decisions of earlier meetings were not implemented (21.74%), and user committee feel the person as an anti-group if someone express concerns over the decisions (8.70%).

Table 18: Participation in Decision -making Process

Item	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Participation		
Participated	81	81.00
Did not participate	19	19.00
Total	100	100.00
Form of Participation		
Inactive	23	25.27
Moderate	28	30.76
Active	40	43.97
Total	91	100.00
Reason for inactive participation		
UC's job	6	26.08
Nobody encouraged	4	17.39
Did not consider it important	2	8.70
Others		
Did not know what to speak	4	17.39
Recommendations of earlier meetings not implemented	5	21.74
Committee feel us Anti- groups	02	8.70
Total	23	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

FUG level decision-making processes are crucial to determining the impact of CF. In the majority of the FUGs decision-making processes are weak and not completely inclusive. Although poorer households are generally benefiting from the improved security of the forest product flows, they are often marginalized from decision-making processes to some extent, leading to dissatisfaction. Women are also generally not involved in decision-making

Figure 1: Respondent's Participation in Different Activities of CFUG in Study Area

Respondents Participation in Different Activities of CFUG in study area
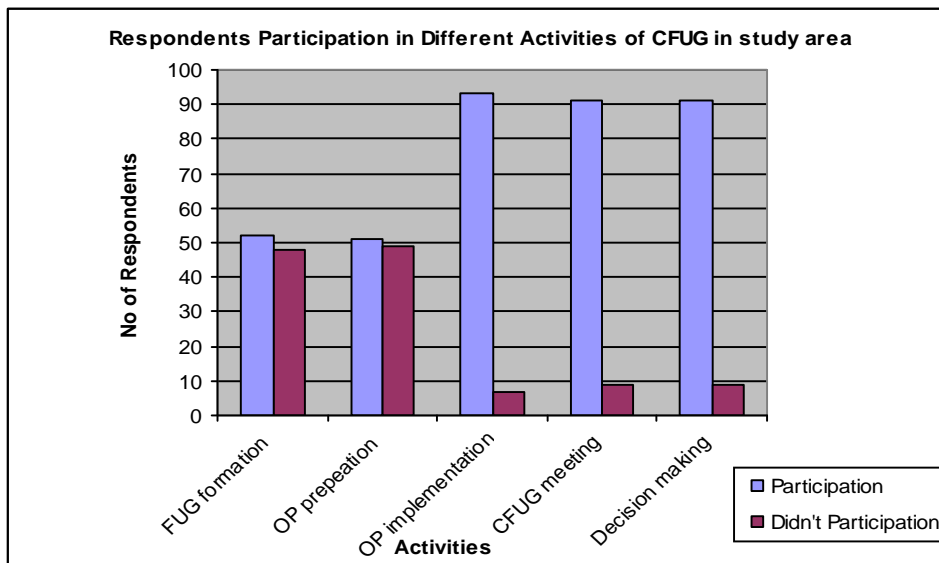
Based on: Table 10, 11, 15,

4.3.4.2 Decision-making Process

Decision-making is one of the major work of any organization. forests user group distributive justice within community. How are the decisions made? How transparent are the decision-making processes? These questions point to the actual focus or locus of power (Ghimire 2004:23). Forest User Group decision-making is supposed to be very participatory, but due to lack of quorum in general assemblies, more often it is not so. The poor and disadvantaged group members are more concerned and busy earning their livelihood elsewhere than attending a general assembly. Even if some of these people are present at meetings, influential people overshadow their authority in decision-making and their investment priorities are not considered (Bhatta 2002:95-123). Effective participation would involve their representation in user groups and labor contribution but also membership of management committees, attendance in meetings, their voices effectively taken into account and views influencing decision-making (Agarwal 1997:23-52).

The FUC is supposed to be responsible to the FUG, which is institutionally and functionally represented only during the general assembly. The FUC is supposed to be responsible to the FUG, which is institutionally and functionally represented only during the general assembly. General assembly's are not taking place in the way

it is envisioned in the CF policy, and this leads to autocracy in the committee. But the level of presence of FUG members at such meetings makes the general assembly virtually non-functional and empowers the FUC (Bhatta 2002:95-123).

4.3.4.3 Decision-makers in General Assembly

Usually the FUG members take part in decision-making process during the general assembly where they review the implemented activities and decide the future plan and course of action. Ideally, general assembly's are meant to have presence of all members of FUGs. Table 18 presents the responses of the respondents regarding the decision-makers in users' assemblies. Majority of the respondents (55%) expressed that users' committees make the decisions in users' assemblies while only 22% said that assemblies make decisions. The chairpersons make 11% decisions in the assemblies and 7% of the respondents did not know the decision makers in the assemblies. The result indicate that committee members dominate the decision making process. Such situation could lead to the formation of autocratic institutions where committee members monopolize the decision making process. This finding is consistent with Nurse et al. (2004:42).

Table 19: Decision-makers in General Assemblies

Responses on Decision-makers	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Do not know	7	7.0
Users' assembly	22	22.0
Users' committee	55	55.0
Chair person	11	11.0
Some elites	5	5.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2015

4.3.3.4 Inclusion/Exclusion in Decision-making Process

The poor do not speak up. With those of higher status, they may even decline to sit down. Weak, powerless and isolated, they are often reluctant to push themselves forward. (Chamber 1983:18)

In Paul Devitt's words:

...The poor are often inconspicuous, inarticulate and unorganized. Their voices may not be heard at public meetings in communities where it is customary for only the big men to put their views. "Poor people rarely meet; when they meet, they often do not speak, when they speak, they are often cautious and differential and what they say is often not listened to, or brushed aside, or interpreted in a bad light (Neupane 2003:55-61). It is rare to find a body or institution that adequately represents the poor in a certain community or area. Outsiders and government officials invariably find it more profitable and congenial to converse with local influential than with the uncommunicative poor. (1977)

Table 19 presents the responses of the respondents regarding the voice heard in decision-making process. The reasons for not hearing the voices in decision-making were as follows: among 17 respondent 23 percent were illiterate, another 19.53 percent were children and they have same comment that they were behaved as a in humanization. The 51.94 percent may have the political issue, no priority for the user groups'.

Table 20: Voice Heard in Decision-making Process.

| Voice Heard in Decision- making Process	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Yes	56	56.00
No	20	20.00
Inactive participation (who didn't speak)	23	23.00
Absentees in the meeting	1	1.00
Total	100	100.00
Perception of respondent about the voice heard		
Fully	18	54.10
Partially	22	45.90
Total	51	100.00
Reason for not heard about the voice		
1. Illiterates are not believed	3	19.53
2. Voice of Users aren't considered	7	51.94
4. Behave us like children	3	30.53
Total	13	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2011.

The perception of the respondents in decision-making process is presented in Table 20. The majority of the respondents (56%) perceive that the decisions are taken by the majority. More than 23 percent express that decisions are taken as guided by FUC. Nearly 17 percent express, decisions are made by consensus. There seems to be some problem in decision-making process. Ideally, almost all decisions should be reached by consensus after discussion for the smooth implementation of the CF program.

Table 21: Perception of Respondent in Decision-making Process

Decision making process	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
By consensus	17	17.00
By majority	56	56.00
As guided by FUC	23	23.00
By some special group (Rich, Ethnic group etc.)	04	4.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2011.

Figure 2: Perception of Respondent in Decision-Making Process
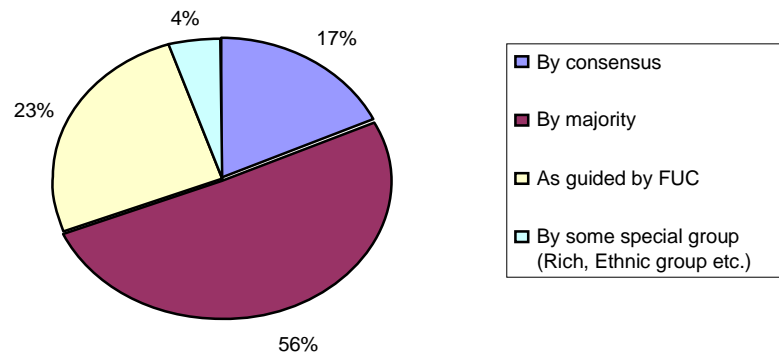
Based on: Table 21

Although the community forest program has achieved many successes but its contribution in livelihood is still questionable. The lack of transparency, unbalanced representation, outsider's control, and unequal distributions are the major factor in this situation that is evident from the above results and discussions. Person who participated in the preparation of OP, and consulted its amendment, they were succeeded to make the decision process. This shows that the literates, elites, and active people are only participating in ongoing management but to protect the forest in nighttime, to show the large number participation in the minutes they are using the household by showing the fear of fines which is proved by the inactive participation and non participation of the respondents in decision-making process. Further, the decision should be taken in assemblies by consensus but the majority of the respondent said the decision is made by the majority. There is no provision to understand about the rules and regulation for the inactive and non-participated respondent through the discussion of the CF. The meetings are conducted during harvesting time for the extraction of the forest products.

4.4   Condition of Community Forest after Handing Over to FUGs

Table 21 shows the responses about the improvement in the condition of the community forests. More than ten percent of the respondents perceived the significant improvement in forest condition. This clearly indicates that forest cover increased considerably when it was handed over to the users. Improved forest condition was attributed to the protection provided by the villagers. At the same time, the users

55

planted trees and managed natural regeneration to improve the forest condition. Improvement in forest condition refers to the increase in vegetation cover and availability of timber and non-timber products from the respective community forests after it was handed over to the users. The large majority of the respondents (75%) perceived a moderate improvement in forest condition during the implementation of the program. The finding supports the findings of Blockhus et al. (1995), Kunwar (2002:36) and Gautam (2002:36, 65). This finding is also consistent with Dev et al. (2004:208-217) that qualitatively, the forest condition had improved after CF practice.

Table 22: Improvement of Forest Condition

Condition of CF	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
No idea	8	8.00
Not improved	7	7.00
Moderately improved	75	75.00
Improved significantly	10	10.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field survey, 2015

4.4.1 Fulfillment of Basic Needs of Forest Products

The percent of respondents who fulfilled the basic needs through their CF was 92 (Table 22). However there was complaint that the Nawer community (41.5%) who have to cook more food rather than the others. Due to lack of sufficient forest resources the forests are opened for few days providing not sufficient time to collect the forest product even for the fulfillment of basic need. Likewise, 9.5 percent of the respondents felt that the forest area is too small in the comparison of household and members of the CF so it was not fulfilling the basic need. Another 32.5 percent of respondents reported there was an undesired plant species in the CF which is known locally as "Ban mara". If the user group could destroy this undesired plant from the CF, there would be enough empty land where the users' could produce forest products to meet their basic needs. In the other reason, 27.5% respondents said due to the other problem the users were not allowed to go to the forest even to collect the basic forest products.

The result shows that community forests were not able to meet the timber demand of the users as the handed over forests either were too small in area or there was not enough timber to meet the demand of the users. The finding demands the

management of CF for more timber production and also to plant more tree species on the private land of the users to meet the need of timber. Promotion of agro forestry and private forestry program is essential to reduce the pressure on community forests for supplying timber and fuel wood.

Table 23: Responses on Fulfillment of Basic Needs of Forest Products from CF

Availability of forest products	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Yes	85	85.0
No	15	15.0
Total	100	100.0
Reason for not being available		
Forest area too small	3	9.5
Forest resources are small	4	27.5
There are undesired spices planted	2	32.5
Security Problem	4	30.5
Total	13	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The decision-makers of the GA are the decision- makers of the distribution of the forest product so the result is the Table 23. Only one fourth of the CFUGs sampled carried out decision-making on distribution of forest product through the CFUG general Assembly, whereas decision-making by CFUG committee occurred in 53 percent. Decision -making by Chairperson is 5 percent and 12 percent did not respond about the question. The result shows that FUCs were more powerful than the assembly in making decisions on distribution of forest products.

Table 24: Decision-makers to Distribute the Forest Products

Decision-makers	Respondent	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Do not know	12	12.00
Assembly	25	25.00
FUC	53	53.00
Chair person	5	15.00
Some elites	5	5.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

4.4.2 Getting Benefit from Community Forest

It is generally argued that common property resources are of greater importance and relevance to the livelihoods of the poor than the non-poor and access to them has potentially a particular redistributive role to play. But in the study area the rich received more benefit (Table 24).

Although the fodder and fuelwood was equally distributed to all users but the valuable timber was not accessible to majority of the members of the groups. The result is consistent with Bartlert and Nurse (1992). There was no provision to get more benefit to the poor and land less. Twenty three percent of the respondent said that almost all the middle class families owned livestock and they were able to get more fodder and bedding materials and even khar from CFs. In this way the middle class are getting more benefit from the forest. Thirty five percent said the benefit sharing system is based on equal basis because whatever they get from the forest product, they get equal. The result revealed that there was not even equality on the benefits from CFs. The result supports the finding of Kanel et al. (2003) that rich and middle groups get more benefits than poorer households in CF program.

Table 25: Responses on Getting More Benefits from CF

Beneficiary	Respondent	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Rich	44	44.00
Middle class	21	21.00
All are getting equal benefits	35	35.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field survey, 2015.

A wide variety of forest products are collected from CF. However, some major products of collective concern are firewood, leaf fodder, grasses, compost material, leaf litter, and timber (small timber for agricultural implements and poles) and wood for construction .The distribution pattern of forest products has been rapidly changing in many CFUGs. In many cases, a tendency to export specially the timber to the nearby urban centers and even to the distant urban centers for high prices has been rapidly increasing even while within group demand for the basic products remained inadequately addressed. Many argue in favor of such econo-centric approach of

CFUGs in claiming that the fund generated would anyway accrue to CFUGs for the welfare of the group in general for the creation of economic opportunities. Such an approach seems deviated from the original objective of the concept of CF that intended to meet the basic forest products need of the rural people residing near by the forest.

It was observed that the distribution system of forest products in some FUGs where the forest products was sufficient to meet the demand of the users, was very simple: a user who needed a product had to buy it by paying its specified price .But must of the groups have the provision of bidding an auction to buy the timber. One of the critical problems in this system of distribution is the inability of the poor users to pay for the products that they need. This issue demands an immediate solution to make the CF Programme to benefit the poorer section of the community in real sense.

4.4.3 Management and Mobilization of forestry Programme

The income of the CFUGs includes income from the forest products plus the income from other sources. The other sources of income could be fine/punishment, membership fees, entrance fees, GON/NGO grants, interest from the loan etc. CFUGs are now generating some income depending upon the forest type and age. Community forest users charge nominal fees for the use of forest products, if they sell them to outsiders, they charge the market price. Fund use of the CFUGs was not consistent with their income and most of the time it was on ad hoc basis. There was a lack of planning for the effective use of funds.

4.4.4 Sources of Income of CFUG Fund

Table 25 indicates sources of income of CFUGs in the study area. The identified sources of income were selling of timber, fuel wood, medicinal and aromatic plants (only healers are using) , other NTFPs, membership/entry fee, grant from other institutions such as DFO, LFP etc., fines and others. In the other sources Pots on rent is playing a vital role to increase the CFUG fund. Some respondents reported that selling of charcoal was also the income source but it was too small because only Blacksmith, tailors, and goldsmith use it. Only few of the respondent said the interest of loan is also the source of income but it is very small in amount.

The source of income also included the selling of stone from the forest area that is legally prohibited. The concerned authorities need to monitor and stop such activities before it is too late to correct such illegal activities.

Table 26: Sources of Income of CFUG Fund

Sources of income [X]	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Remarks
Sale of timber	75	
Sale of fuel wood	81	
Sale of Jadibuti	04	
Sale of other NTFPs	62	
Membership fee (entry fee)	57	
Grant from other institutions	14	
Fines	86	
Others	18	
Pots and chairs on rent	6	
Charcoal	4	
Money from bee rearing farmers	3	
Selling of stone from forest	2	
Selling of Patla	4	
Interest from the loans	2	
Total	21	

Source: Field Survey, 2015 [X] Multiple Responses

4.4.5 Decision-makers for Use of the CFUG Fund

Table 26 shows the responses regarding who decides on what to use the FUG fund. Generally, FUC in the study area are exercising their power, but some elites and the chairperson guide them because they are more aware of legislation, have access to information and are capable to use them for their benefit. Many user group members and even the women and dalits in committee member are hardly aware of their own community forest constitution and operational plans. Lack of adequate knowledge and technical skill among users might be the reason for the less participation of FUG assembly in decision- making process.

Table 27: Decision-makers for Use of the CFUG Fund

Decision–makers	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Do not know	9	9.00
FUG assembly	25	25.00
FUC	51	51.00
Chair person	10	10.00
Some elites	5	5.00
Total	100	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

4.4.6 Area of Investment of FUG fund

Regarding the awareness about the operators of CF accounts, the large majority of the respondents (75%) were aware about the account operators. Almost all of the CFUGs have the provision that the annual expenditures need to be presented in assemblies for final approval. Majority of the respondents expressed that expenditures were presented in their assemblies but most of them were not able to know the details of the expenditures. Generally assemblies were called from 11 to 12 am but usually started at 1 to 2 pm, as most of the people gathered late. Planning of the assemblies are also done in such a way that there were many speeches, which consumed most of the time. Thereafter, the committee would present some agenda related to the preceding year's program and plans for next year. By the time these agendas were presented it would be late for many that were present and they would start leaving the assembly. At the end, all that had been presented by the committee would get approved in a hurry. Virtually there was very little or no time for discussion and questioning.

Table 28: Area of Investment of FUG Fund

Area of investment	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Remarks
Forest development	86	
Community infrastructure dev.	82	
Credit, loan	03	
Tea, snacks	70	
Meeting allowances	16	
Allowances for forestry staff	54	
Training for institutional development	10	
Stationary (office expenses)	59	
Others	29	
Support to others CF building	03	
Helped DFO by buying carpet	02	
Purchase of Pots and Chairs	08	
Helped victims (users') of Natural calamities and fire	04	
Buying plants	05	
Preparing watchman's dress	02	
Buying sports utilities	06	
Prize distributing for honest users	08	
Helping blinds and disabled	07	
Teacher's salary	09	
Sewing training for Women	03	
Rent for CF building	07	
Paying temple's priest	04	
Running Pairawi classes regularly	03	
Keeping audit like NG system and salary for auditor	05	
Total	31	

Source: Field Survey, 2015   ᵡ Multiple Responses

The result also shows that mobilizing the CF fund for income generating activities was not in the priority of CFUGs. The area of investment of CF fund is shown in Table 27. It showed that equal priority was given to the forest development and community infrastructure development. The results showed that the expenditures on tea and snacks, stationary, and allowance were given more priority than the institutional development related activities. There appears to be lack of control of the investment in unproductive activities. Therefore, there is a space to minimize the spending in unproductive activities like stationery, buildings, tea/snacks, allowances, etc. This finding is useful for the program implementers to work in such issues.

4.4.7 Investment in community infrastructure development

Table 28 presents the CF funded community infrastructure development items. Mobilization of fund in community development was the major activity prioritized by the users. This is one of the highly demanded activities in the community as it is directly linked with the welfare of the community. Community forestry has also been a major contributor to community infrastructure development. Besides rural infrastructure development, community forestry has also supported its users in case of illness, literacy classes, social mobilization etc. CFUG fund was mostly invested on construction or maintenance of school buildings, small drinking water projects, Village trails, irrigation canal maintenance, culverts and others. As the demand for such activities is high, community activities should be prioritized.

Table 29: CF Funded Community Infrastructure Development Items (Multiple Responses)

Items	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Remarks
School	79	
road	18	
Chutare	07	
Drinking water	13	
Irrigation	10	

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Area of improvement of community infrastructures under FUG support is tabulated in Table 29. It clearly shows the contribution of community forestry in rural infrastructure development. The result also shows the importance of CFUG fund and also indicates that efforts should be made for investment of the fund for fund generation opportunities.

**Table 30: Area of Improvement of Community Infrastructure under FUG
               Support**

Area of Improvement [x]	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Remarks
Village trail	18	
Kulo	11	
Drinking water	38	
Health post	05	
Temple	57	
School	81	
Chautaro	22	
Community building	68	
Others	07	
Walls surrounding temple	01	
Cole	02	
Football ground	02	
Agricultural road	02	

Source: Field Survey, 2015. [x] Multiple responses

4.4.7 Support for Income Generating Activities:

Table 30 shows the responses regarding the support of FUGs on income generating activities. The large majority of the respondents (81%) expressed that there was not any support from the FUG fund for income generating activities. Only 19 percent of the respondents expressed that the income generating activities supported by the FUG were vegetable production, small livestock raising (mobile fund for the goat keeper), bee keeping and small business. While reviewing the meeting minutes and OPs it was revealed that interest rate for the invested amount from the FUG fund for income generation activities varied from less than five percent to 24 percent per annum. The finding shows that fund mobilization for income generation activities is low in priority than rural infrastructure and CFUGs administration. At the same time, the finding also indicates that interest rate was not in favor of the poorer households.

Table 31: The Income-generating Activities Supported by FUG

Item	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Support in Income generating activities		
Yes	19	19.00
No	81	81.00
Total	100	100.00
Income generating activities		
Vegetable production	03	12.00
Small livestock rearing	9	72.00
Bee- keeping	02	6.00
Small business	04	10.00
Total	18	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

4.4.8 Use of FUG Fund for Welfare of the Poor

Table 31 presents that the more than ten percent (18 %) of the respondent said the mobile fund for income generation is for the welfare of the poor but the 82 % did not respond because there was no any provision to invest the fund for the welfare of the poor.

**Table 32: Provision to Use the FUG Fund for Welfare of Poor Users**

Item	Respondents	
	Number (f)	Percentage
Provision for welfare of poor		
Yes	18	18.00
No	82	82.00
Total	100	100.00
Invested activities		
Mobile fund for goat production	10	72.00
Rs.100 for vegetable farming	08	28.00
Total	18	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Sharing of benefits from the CF, especially income was another aspect where poor and marginalized members did not benefit significantly. The money that was generated by selling the forest products was mostly spent on activities related to infrastructure building and community development, besides spending on forest development activities. Other most common activities that they have invested in were

donation to schools, drinking water, gravelling of local roads, construction of culverts etc. The poorer families in the community could not draw significant benefit from all these investments made from the income of the CF.

Figure 3: Fund Mobilization
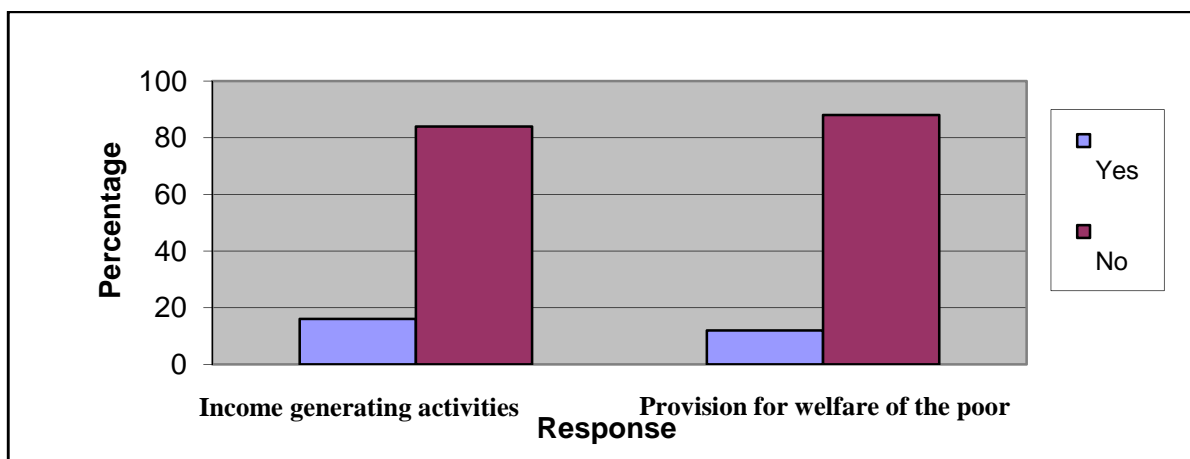
CHAPTER- FIVE

PEOPLE PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY GROUP ACTIVITIES

5.1 People's knowledge About the Forest Policy

Since, to be aware or knowledge about the policy of the forest management is the basic necessary for the local forest manager. Not only for the executive committee member who are responsible to run the FUG's all activities but also equally important for the user member to know about the policy for creative feedback for the EC members. So that they can develop their management capacity, confidence, can be aware of their right and capable to bear their roles and responsibilities correctly. But relating to the studied FUGs, not only the women but also men have very poor knowledge about the operational plan, constitution and the government's policy for the community forestry management. It was very surprising that when the secretary of the studied FUG was requested to provide the OP and the constitution available for the researcher, he gave OP only. When he again asked for the constitution, he replied they don't have any other documents. Finally, when the chairperson told him to see in the office and he found it. Looking to it he expressed that he has seen it for the first time.

This is an example about the local people's sensitivity and consciousness for the policy. The Key person who has the major role in the forest management has not read the written document about his right, role and the responsibility. Those members who have involved in EC for the long time have more idea than the new member. And they seem more sincere to the policy than the new members.

The condition Some 40 years crossed illiterate people responded that the policy is not to harm the greenery of the forest like cutting the green tree for the firewood and not to do those activities which has prohibited. One lower caste people told that what is written they can't read and nobody orally tells them about this. So they remain unknown about the Programme, special facility for

the people and the advantages for the involvement in the forest resource management. So it can be concluded saying people has nominal or almost don't posses knowledge about their community forest. The women are more miserable than men's. For example former EC member's opinion can be taken. She disclosed - "Women don't feel necessary to know about policy related to different activities of forest management. What the dominant EC members say, it is the policy for us rather than written or made like how much cost to pay for firewood. Since men of the family know it is not necessary women also know same thing." During the field studies, 60 people were asked their knowledge about the policy of the forest. All of the people had the common answer 'I don't know' (in Nepali thaha chhaina).

5.2 Involvement in forest resources collection by gender

In households used to collect grass and firewood annually and the entire household used to collect firewood and grass, timber is collected according to their need. Following table shows the involvement in forest resources collection by gender.

Table 33 . Involvement in forest Resource collection by gender

Forest Resources	Household members involved in forest resource collection						Total no of respondents	
	Male	%	Female	%	Both	%	No	%
Firewood	18	18.00	38	38.00	34	34.00	86	100
Grass cutting	11	11.00	62	62.00	22	22.00	105	100
Timber	74	74.00	-	-	24	24.00	98	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

In this study 86 household from different caste and ethnic groups were taken for sample. Out of 86 sample households that was mentioned in methodology (remaining 14 households are not involved in forest resource collection). Among them male from 18 household, female from 38 household and both male and female from 34 household used to go for firewood collection. Similarly male from 11 household, female from 62 household and both male and female from 22 household used to go for grass cutting. So on male from 74 households used to go for timber collection and 24 households used to go both genders to collect timber. Above table shows that high involvement of female in forest resources collection.

5.3 Participation in general meeting of Ranke by age and sex

General meeting of user group held one times per year. There is compulsory provision to attend the general meeting of Ranke but some household don't go in general meeting. The information condition of meeting attends by age and gender was collected by household survey. Following table presents the sex and age composition of Ranke Meeting attends.

Table 34 Distribution of household members participated in general meeting by Age and Sex

Age	Male	%	Female	%
5-15	8	8.00	9	9.00
15-25	15	39.00	14	14.00
25-35	26	41.00	11	11.00
35-45	56	12.00	13	13.00
Total	107	100	47	47.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

According to field survey, male participation is higher than female Participation in general meeting. In general meeting during survey period 100.0% were from male and 47.00% were from female participated.

5.4 Women's Knowledge about Forest and Forest User Group

Generally the woman who has crossed the 40 years has known the traditional names and the physical characteristics of the different part of the forest. So they know the forest through these names (specifically the difference place of the forest) rather than through the name of the community forestry and its sub-areas. They also know the major species of the forest. Kaulo, chutro, simali etc. and their different values, purpose and appropriate season to harvest their products. Women have told many times the community forest as our forest (Hamro-Ban). But they don't know that how does it is their forest, or they don't know the process how to be the member of the community forestry. They don't know about any process of the FUG like how to become member, how executive committee has been formed and the how it works. Most of the women have known their community forest name as the Ranke Ban and some know as the Ranke Samudayik ban. Many of them even don't know about the general assembly (Sadharan Sabha). They have seen the card of the FUG member but most of them don't know its purposes. Illiterate women told that the member of the CFUG told him to keep it safely, so she has put it in the box but she doesn't know what it is. A thirty-five year old woman expressed that it is the Ban ko card (forest's card) but she has never looked it carefully because she has confidence that her husband has knowledge about the forest affairs. So she seems it is not necessary for her to know about it.

Women know the EC member very well who are in EC since 4-5 years. But they don't know all the new members who are in the committee since one year. Even about their village' (tole's) representative in the EC they are unaware who is he/she. Therefore women know a lot about the forest but they have very little knowledge about the FUG and its functional aspects.

To the response of the answer what kind of knowledge you possess about their community forest, one different caste's women reply in the question that why should we know about the forest? Our gardens (indicating to the husband) know everything. Since he knows everything why should I take interest? But there are some women also who have interest to be knowledge about FUG and they have some knowledge about it. But numbers of those kinds of the women are very few. But in general it can be assumed that women possess nominal knowledge about the forest management through the organization/FUG.

5.5 Relationship between Users and Committee Members

The women representative of the EC also disclosed that she has never discuss with other women about the women's related issues but what the other member of the EC decides it becomes the women's voice. Any women did not know the woman who was one of the women representatives of the last committee. By her name nobody knows her and it is not new in the rural community. But as the person of the same neighbor community also nobody knows her that is very interesting. The relationship between the people of the different interest groups and their EC representative is necessary to understand. Women who are more than 50 percent in the total population of the users, they don't have any knowledge that women are the separate interest group having the common problem, knowledge, opportunities and access. They don't have ever talk about the forest related issues formally or informally. Neither the EC member of the certain group's representative nor the users peoples have ever separately discussed about the women related issue.Therefore, between the EC members of the different groups an the people of this group has not any special relationship as a representative and the users or as the representative of certain interest groups but it is the normal as they have with rest of this group's members.

5.6 Constitution Procedure and term of committee member

User committee comprised of 15 members; among them 33 percent seats are secured for women. But in Ranke there are only 3 female members. The term of committee member is of 5 years generally. The Users committee members are used to select by the consensus of the general meeting of the user group. If any opposition rises, members must be selected through election among the member of the user group.

5.7 Role of women in RankeCFUG general Meeting

In RankeCFUG, 15 of women attendance is found in general meeting. Only physical attendance is not enough to make decision in meeting. 22 women, who involved in general meeting, were taken in sample to study the role of women in decision making process. Following table shows the role of women in general meeting of RankeCFUG. (General Meeting is Supreme body of RankeCFUG)

Table 35 Role of Women in decision making in RankeCFUG general meeting

Role of women in general meeting	No. of Respondents by meeting attend	Percent
Like Audience	26	64.00
Giving Suggestion	5	18.00
Discussion	13	12.00
Decision making	6	6.00
Total respondent	51	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Among 51 Female respondents, who involved in general meeting, 64.00 percent member used to attend meeting like audience, 18.00 percent member attend meeting giving suggestions, 12.00 percent member attend meeting taking part in discussion and 6.00% female attend meeting sharing in decision making.

5.8 Affecting factors for women's participation in CF activities

Affecting factors for women especially for study area is divided in two categories: which are the barriers for women's participation, are mentioned in obstacles increase the women's participation are included in motivational factors and other factors. Factors supporting to, Obstacles for women's participation and motivational factors.

5.8.1 Motivational factor for women's participation

In this study, following 5 alternative factors was given for selection about the motivational factor, which factor motivates them to involve in community forest activities. Following table show the view of respondents about the motivational factor.

Table 36 Distribution of respondents by motivational factor for women in community forest activities

S.N.	Motivational factor	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Local Political leader	12	28.00
2	Self motivational	16	21.00
3	Awareness program launched by NGO/INGO	7	15.00
4	Government Policies	9	23.00
5	Husband (Family member)	6	13.00
Total		30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Above table shows, local political leader (28.00%) and husband (13.00%) (Family member) are more effective motivational persons to motivate women for community forest Programme.

5.8.2 Obstacles for women's participation in CF activities

The main obstacles of women's participation in community forest and other local development activities in the study area are briefly mentioned in following topics.

) Lack of time / Household work load

They participated in meeting and other development activities, they must left their household's works. So lack of time is also major obstacles for women's participation. Higher involvement of women in child rearing, feeding household members and livestock, agriculture works make the women busier.

) Traditional male dominated culture

According to the culture, meeting attend, decision making and participate in public activities are the duty male of not the duty of female. In study area, there exists Hindu cultural system. In Hindu, culture women are fixed to do household work and they have restriction to go and to stay away from the home without male family member. The concept of purity of female make limited for female to be near and to speak without hesitation with unfamiliar person. So that one of the major problem for women's participation forestry Programme.

) Poor economic condition

In the study area most of the households are poor. They spend their time for substantial economic activities. Due to the poor economic condition they lack time and education. The poor women must be dependent upon wealthy person for livelihood, so they couldn't share their ideas if the views were against the view and interest of wealthy person, so they couldn't share their ideas if the views were against the view and interest of wealthy person. So poor women have obstacles to participate in Public activities and have problems to

share their views independently in meeting. In this way poor economic is one of the major obstacles of women participation.

⟩ Lack of knowledge about the rules of community forest

Due to the lack of knowledge about the rules of community forest women couldn't share in discussion and decision making process properly. The lack of these knowledge women became passive in CF management activities.

⟩ Lack of Permission to attend meeting

In study area, women are fixed for their duty to clean the house, to make food, to wash clothes and agricultural works. Mainly newly married bride, daughter-in-law and daughters of family are lack of permission to go public activities due to the concept of purity. If someone wants to participate, it may be problem of permission for her to attend meeting.

⟩ Feeling of needless to participate

Some female's respondents of study area viewed that attend in meeting, discussion, decision-making are the work of male member of CFUG. Male member of community forest user group are capable to manage the community forest. So they feel needless to participate in meeting. This feeling is also a obstacles in women's participation.

⟩ Lack of Empowerment among Female

Females have humiliation feeling in the study area. They feel they are unable than the male for discussion, decision-making and forest rearing due to lack of empowerment. They feel they could not make good relation with district forest staff and they are not capable to do managerial task than male. The humiliation feeling makes the women passive in community forest management activities.

⟩ Less chance to keep view for women in every development activities

In the study area male are playing dominant roles in every development activities. In the every meeting they do careless for women and minimize the

ability of women. Male used to give less chance to keep view for women. So these causes make women unwilling to participate and didn't want to put their views in meeting. So this is one of the main obstacles of women's participation.

⺁ Illiteracy

Women are more illiterate than male in study area. Illiterate women have problems to read and write the rules, regulations and minutes of the CF meeting. Due to the illiteracy they have problem to learn forest management skills also. Illiteracy is one of the major obstacles of women's participation.

Above mentioned any single causes are not responsible for the low participation of women in CF management activities in the study area. The combination of, all of the causes are main problems for women participation.

5.8.3 Participation of Women Having the Heterogeneous or Diverse Identities

As already discussed in the literature review section, women's roles, access, rights, position and the involvement in the FUG is determined by the their position and status in community. The socio-cultural background, educational status, economic and the class/ethnicity plays major roles to shape the women's involvement in the community forest management.

The macro government level policy as well as the micro FUG level policy has addressed the need of women's participation in forest resource management like - 'Priority will be given to the poor, women and disadvantaged group of the community (Garib, Mahila tatha bipanna barga lai prathamikta). But it has not addressed and sufficiently recognized the different interest group among the women like poor women, so-called lower caste women (dalit women) and the socio-economically disadvantaged group's women. The FUG level policy also has repeated the same sentences in their operational plan and the constitution. Those have focused on the representation of the women in management in decision making. But the OP and the constitution have not made specific condition as according to the social

diversity and the interest of the all users. It has also categorized women a single interest group supposing all women have same background and characteristics.

This superficial identification of the women as the single category has made the chance of the participation of the women from the dominant social group like the elite class women, high caste women, outspoken and the powerful women of the community. The women representative of the EC so far having the post are from the Brahman and the Chhetri caste. During the interview the other so called lower caste and the ethnic group's women expressed that they are never asked to be the women representative of the forest user group and nobody told them to be an EC member. Although all the women have the same access and right to hold the post and the take the benefit through the forest management, only the socially selected women are offered and accept the post.

In other opportunities also same things repeats, like taking the post of the EC. For example the woman who has appeared on the some type of the forest management training in the range post is also from the Brahman caste. On the reaction of that, other women of the communities told that they didn't tell everybody or make discussion even with other users regarding that there are such kinds of the opportunities for the women. Rather they without informing the women they selected a woman for the training. For this matter the chairperson's view was that although women make comment now for the decisions but they were neither interested nor capable to attend the trainings. Discussion within the few FUG members, we choose the most appropriate women for the trainings. According to the Blacksmith women they don't know that when the FUG formed and how the EC woman member become their representatives. In reality, according to the EC member women first the men of the communities gather at one place they discuss and called only those women whom they like to call. She was also called in such way and requested to be an EC member, not by calling all the women making discussion within them or making selection among them.

Therefore, in practice also there is no involvement of the women having heterogeneous background although the communities are heterogeneous in terms of various characteristics.

The policies are not effective to include all interest groups of women in community forest management. It has indirectly effective the overall women's involvement. If there will be specific provision to participate actively by the all caste/class, economic and education level women, and certainly there will be more women's involvement. Because it will make a suitable environment for all women equal participation even from the socially disadvantaged groups and can maintain the 'equity among women's in community forest management. But neither the policy in the government and the FUG level nor the field practices seem sensitive to make equity among the women to make the women's involvement better. If the OP of the FUG has made any specific provision and the participatory strategy to apply according to the characteristics of the user women at the FUG level, it can fulfill the gap of the government policy and create a practical approach for the inclusion of the all interest group's women.

5.8.4 Views of Local people about women's role towards community forest

In this study, views of local people were collected from the key informants and in the course of data collection local people were consulted informally. Various kinds of views were found about the women' role toward the community forest management and other development activities. Views of local people are divided in two parts; positive views and negative views for presentation.

5.8.4.1 Positive Views about women

Positive views of local people about the role of women are as follows:

〕 Women are also helping to manage community forest.

〕 Women used to help for forest watchman to conserve forest.

) Women respect and follow Ranke CFUG rules.

) Women can be active if they have chance to do something.

) Women used to participate in CF meeting and they share their ideas and used to take part in discussion and decision making process.

Women of study area are positive about community forest. Unless they are busier in their household work they are helping to manage the forest. Women are actively participating in general meeting of CF and they follow and respect rules, they help for forest guard for forest rearing. They have no experience to take part in discussion in decision making but they are trying to keep their views in CF general meeting. If they have training, awareness programs, get support and encouragement from males they can play active role in forest management and other development activities. They must be included in development activities without gender bias.

5.8.4.2 Negative views about women.

In the study area, some of the local people's view that women can not play good role for forest management. The negative views do not want to participate in CF meeting.

) Women must manage their internal household tasks, it is not a duty of women to attend meeting and be active in social development activities.

) Women couldn't be able to be active and to play dominant and creative roles even they have chance to do something.

) Women have no wide concept, to manage public concerns without bias.

) According to the some local people views, women did not want to Women must manage their internal household tasks, it is not a duty of women to attend meeting and be active in social development activities.

) Women couldn't be able to be active and to play dominant and creative roles even they have chance to do something.

） Women have no wide concept, to manage public concerns without bias.

） According to the some local people views, women did not want to Women do not want to participate in CF meeting.

） Women have no idea and ability to manage forest.

） Women don't care about public concerns.

Participate in development activities. They have no interest about the social development activities. They have no interest about the social development activities including CF management. By tradition, task of women is inside the household and agriculture field. Women are of narrow concept; they couldn't make social issues with neutral way. They couldn't play dominant role in public activities even they have chance to do so.

The negative views about women are affected by the traditional male dominated concept. The strong supporter of traditional male dominant cultural system has negative views about women's role towards public concerns. The next group of local people believes that social development is not possible without proper involvement of women in local development activities including the use and management of resources.

5.8.4.3 Users' Participation in CF Activities

Participation in this study refers to the involvement of forest users in various activities of the community forestry program such as formation of user groups, preparation and implementation of operational plans, and on-going management and other related Programme.

5.8.4.4 Participation in FUG Formation and OP Preparation

The majority of the respondents were aware of the forest user-group and 52 percent of them attended in the process of FUG formation. The result showed that participation of the users in different activities of FUG formation process could not

include a wider mass. Sixty percent of the respondents were aware about their OPs. Nearly half (51 percent) of the respondents participated in the preparation of OPs and took part in the discussions, field survey, and preparation of rules and regulations during the preparation of OPs. The majority of the respondents perceived that they were aware of the constitution of CFUGs. However, majority of them were not aware regarding some of the specific provisions of OPs.

The results clearly indicated that FUG formation process could not include a wider mass. Similarly, a significant number of the users did not participate in the preparation of OPs. The finding also revealed that users did not care much about the provisions of OPs showing that they were much concerned about what they get from their CFs rather than the management aspects of the OPs. The results suggest that the Programme implementers should focus more on social mobilization aspect and need to ensure the wider participation in the development of OPs during the CF handing over process in the area. Social mobilization is a process of empowering communities for social change. It is, in fact, a capacity building process through which groups within a community plan, carry out, and evaluate activities on a participatory and sustained basis to meet their needs and to improve their standard of living. Wider participation in all phases of community - based activities is essential in order to achieve sustainable socio-economic development.

5.8.4.5 Participation in On-going Management

Majority of the respondents knew that their OP was amended while a considerable number did not know whether the OP was amended or not. Likewise, some users were not consulted in the amendment process. Major reasons for non-consultation were as committee neglected Dalit, women and Illiterates, there were conflicts with executives, Committee thinks there was no need of voice of users, and

Committee neglected students and children. The responses showed that FUCs were not unbiased in many instances and the users' participation was not satisfactory in OPs amendments.

. The majority of the respondents perceive that their participation was not active. The finding indicate that committee members dominate the decision making process and the users' voices were partially heard. The majority of the respondents attended the FUG meetings 1 to 5 times a year. Some of the users were not well aware about the importance of the FUG meetings .Regarding the participation in decision-making, the majority of the respondents participated in the decision-making process.

The result indicate that committee members dominate the decision making process. Such situation could lead to the formation of autocratic institutions where committee members monopolize the decision making process. The majority of the respondents perceive that the majority takes the decisions.

CHAPTER- SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary and Conclusion

The study was conducted in the Bhojpur district of Nepal. The general objective of the study was to identify and analyze the people participation in community forestry program of Bhojpur district. Specifically, the study aimed at (i) assessing the extent to which the user groups participated in planning and implementation of the community forestry Programme; and (ii) analyzing the involvement of community forestry Programme. Several FUG members were selected randomly from the 11 FUGs in one VDCs. Survey method was used to collect information through one set of pre-tested questionnaires. Some of the information was collected by reviewing the OPs, meeting minutes and progress reports and field observation of the selected FUGs. The data collection was conducted in DEC.15 2014.

People are taken as an important users and managers in the community forestry. The government policy has also emphasized to their certain percent compulsory representation in CF management. Many exemplary works have been done by people in different part of the country GoN/N, 2000). But in the studied FUG, very nominal people are taking part in community forestry management and confined only within certain activities. Although FUG's constitution and OP also mentioned that priority will be given to people it doesn't seems being practiced. Practice is going to one way and policy is indicating to another way about the people's involvement in community forestry Programme. Therefore there is the mismatch between the policy and practice.

The study is based on primary and secondary data and the nature of the data is qualitative. Among the total households, only 104 households are chosen by caste or ethnicity for the study. Basically, Female respondents were selected for interview and male as well as females were selected according to the

convenience for household survey. Key information and focus group discussion also used to collect information.

The total population of the users of the Ranke CFUG is the total population of this VDC. According to the census 2068, Total population of pyauli VDC is 1756. Among them males are 856 and females are 900.According to the field survey, male literacy rate is 71.18 percent, Female literacy rate is 56.94 percent and total literacy rate is 63.86 percent. In study area, 57.59 percent sampled household heads are male and 26.41 percent household heads are female. In forest resource collection, females involved in firewood collection is 52.25 percent, in grass cutting is 61.07 percent, but male involvement in firewood collection is 13.18 percent, in Grass cutting is 6.03 percent in timber cutting and collection is 75.46 percent. In timber collection hired workers also has been used. In grass and firewood collection participation of female is high.

Participation of people is important factors of development Programme similarly , forestry Programme Participation of women in general meeting of RankeCFUG is 23.21 percent and participation of males are 73.79 percent. Participation of female in meeting was like audience is high. Taking part actively in general meeting, sharing in decision making and discussion is very low. According to the government policy (master plan, 1988) minimum 1/3 of the committee members must be female but in RankeCFUG committee there are just 3 female members among 15 members of the total committee.

According to the field study, obstacles for people to participate community forest activities are as follows.

) Traditional concept of the Programme.

) Lack of time/Household work load.

) Lack of knowledge about community forestry.

) Poor economic condition.

) Lack of permission to attend meeting.

）Lack of empowerment.

）Feeling of women needless to participate in public concern.

）Less chance to view for women in every sector of development activities.

）Illiteracy.

According to the field observation and view of all of the respondents the condition of forest is very good compared to the past condition.

In Ranke CFUG, awareness program are not launched to make people's active involvement in forest management activities and there is traditional concept of Programme system is existing. So people's involvement in development activities is very low. In FUG level, strategy having participatory approach not only for the user but having sensitivity to social diversity can include all the interest group's people in community forest management.

The policy has not made the identification of the different interest groups of people in CF management but all the people have been considered as a single category. So that policy and implementation strategies of this FUG seems insufficient to make compulsory involvement or pull the people having diverse social identities in CF management. So, policy is ineffective to address social differentiation of people and not sensitive to the heterogeneity of the people with in this single identify as 'people'. Therefore, replacing the reorganization of people a single interest group to people has diverse interest group can be a next important step of the Policy.

6.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the major findings this study, the following specifics are recommended.

- Awareness program must be launched both for male as well as female to make active participation of women in forest management level

- The peoples, who are really involved in the forest resource collection, must be persuaded to attend the general meeting of community forest management.

- Female are real user of forest resources and real victims of deforestation. So they must be encouraged in forestry field.

- Empowerment program must provide to female users of CF.

- Male and Female motivational program should be launched to make man more helpful and feeling of housework is not only of female's duty.

- Literacy program must provided to female users of CF.

- Income generation from forest resources should be launched and opportunity should be given to women users.

- Users should give the attention in natural regeneration management and fire line Construction/maintenance for the sustainable development of their CF.

- Forest resources mainly timber and firewood must be collected by skillful hired workers and distributed being conscious about family size also.

6.3 Recommendation for Further Research

) .Gender and equity issues in community forestry.

) Impact of community forestry in poverty reduction.

) Income generating opportunities in community forests.

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